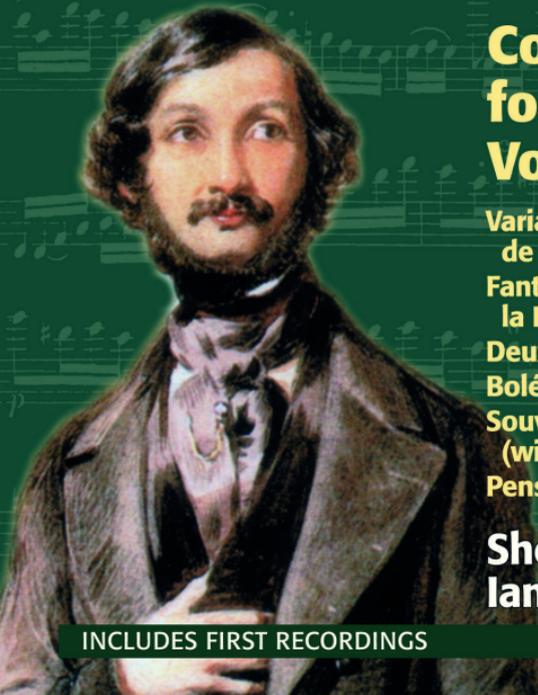




# Heinrich Wilhelm **ERNST**



## **Complete Music for Violin and Piano Volume Two**

**Variations brillantes sur un thème  
de Rossini, Op. 4**  
**Fantaisie brillante sur la Marche et  
la Romance d'Otello de Rossini, Op. 11**  
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**INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS**

# HEINRICH WILHELM ERNST

## Complete Music for Violin and Piano, Volume 2

by Mark Rowe

Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst was one of the most important performers of the nineteenth century. In 1884, reviewing over thirty years of avid concert-going, the Rev. H. R. Haweis wrote: '[If], looking back and up to the present hour, I am asked to name off hand, the greatest players – the very greatest I ever heard – I say at once Ernst, Liszt, Rubinstein'.<sup>1</sup> His assessment was shared by the professionals. 'Ernst was the greatest violinist I ever heard,' said Joseph Joachim, 'he towered above the others [...]. He became my ideal of a performer, even surpassing in many respects the ideal I had imagined for myself.'<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Berlioz could not say enough about the genius of his friend: 'Let me reiterate, Ernst, who is a great musician as well as a great violinist (as well as being the most delightfully humorous man I know) is the complete rounded artist, profoundly and predominantly expressive in everything he does.'<sup>3</sup> As a performer, he was particularly admired for his stupendous technique, his intense and melancholic expressivity, his capricious sense of humour, and a tone which came remarkably close to the human voice.

These gifts, moreover, were lavished not only on the solo violin: he also made an outstanding contribution to public chamber music. Sir Julius Benedict, for example, reminiscing about the dismal premiere of one of Beethoven's late quartets, had no doubts about which violinist finally revealed these works as masterpieces: 'Not until Ernst had completely imbued himself in the spirit of these compositions could the world discover their long hidden beauties.'<sup>4</sup> When one also discovers that Ernst was Paganini's most significant rival, the first Jewish violin virtuoso of international renown, an important technical innovator and a highly successful and influential composer, it is natural to wonder who exactly he was.

Ernst was born on 8 June 1812 to a middle-class Jewish family from Brünn in the Austrian Empire (now Brno in the Czech Republic). At the age of nine, he began to take violin lessons with a local baker called Johann Sommer and – assisted by private study of Leopold Mozart's *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles*

<sup>1</sup> Rev. H. R. Haweis, *My Musical Life*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1902, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Andreas Moser, *Geschichte des Violinspiels*, Max Hesses Verlag, Berlin, 1923, pp. 519 and 533.

<sup>3</sup> Hector Berlioz, *Memoirs*, ed. and trans. David Cairns, Victor Gollancz, London, 1970, p. 538.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Alexander Thayer, *Life of Beethoven*, ed. Alan Pryce-Jones, 3 vols., Centaur Press, London, 1960, Vol. 3, pp. 139–40.

of *Violin Playing* – started to make rapid progress. Within a year, he was taken on by the leading violin teacher of the town, a Herr Leonhard, and won a place at the excellent music school of the Augustinian Monastery of St Thomas. With these advantages, his progress became even more remarkable: in March 1824, he made his first public appearance as a soloist; and in 1825, Leonhard suggested he should audition for the Vienna Conservatory.

His father took him to the violin professor Joseph Böhm – a close associate of Beethoven and Schubert – who quickly realised that Ernst was nearly his equal in practical skill, although he still had things to learn about music and musicianship. Ernst moved to Vienna, and for the next three years studied with Böhm (and played at his informal quartet-evenings), took lessons in music theory from the composer Ignaz Seyfried (who had conducted the premier of Beethoven's *Fidelio*) and received advice and encouragement from the popular composer and virtuoso Joseph Mayseder. Within ten months of his arrival, Ernst had made several well received public appearances and won the Conservatory's first prize.

His education ensured the Viennese classics entered his bloodstream, but it was Paganini's arrival in March 1828 that proved the overwhelming influence. A stunned Ernst attended as many of Paganini's concerts as he could, practised the Op. 1 *Caprices* furiously and was at last rewarded with an audition before the master. Amongst the pieces he played was the E major *Caprice, La Chasse*, and, having misunderstood the instruction 'flautato' ('flute-like') at the head of the score, played the whole piece in harmonics. The astounded Paganini, receiving a taste of his own medicine, cried 'He's a little devil!' and predicted a great future for the boy.

In August 1828, Ernst's elderly father fell seriously ill, and Ernst returned to Brünn to help his older half-brother nurse the invalid and run the family business. His prolonged absence caused problems with the Conservatory, and Ernst, feeling that Vienna had little more to teach him, resolved not to return. He set off on a tour of southern Germany in April 1829 and, after another meeting with Paganini, decided to master every aspect of his art. Much to Paganini's irritation, he therefore followed him from town to town, renting rooms next to him, attending his concerts, listening to his practice, transcribing his compositions and copying his techniques.

Meanwhile, the young violinist sustained himself by giving concerts of his own, at one of which he played back Paganini's unpublished *Nel cor* variations to the twitchy composer. Naturally enough, the public's attention and money were largely monopolised by Paganini, and on several occasions Ernst became severely depressed about his own comparative lack of success. But a number of his concerts received good reviews, and at least one was heard by a dissatisfied law student named Robert Schumann, whom Ernst advised to take up music professionally.

Paganini intended to visit Paris in 1830, but the Revolution delayed his arrival until February 1831. Ernst followed two months later and quickly secured a concert with the great soprano Wilhelmine Schroeder-Devrient at the Théâtre des Italiens. But this debut proved unnerving. As a comparatively unknown violinist, the audience greeted him with a barrage of hissing, and Ernst only recovered his composure when the orchestra, appalled by the audience's reaction, stood up to applaud him. He then played well, but the evident asperity of Parisian audiences

made him wary, and he vowed to devote himself to solitary study until his technique was beyond reproach.

Sharing lodgings with the Norwegian violinist Ole Bull, and sustaining himself by teaching and playing in private houses, Ernst allowed himself to perform in public concerts again only after June 1832, but his reappearance may still have been premature. Some newspaper reviews remained equivocal, and in mid-1833 he decided to retire for several more months to perfect his technique in the less pressured atmosphere of Switzerland, where he played with the Irish pianist John Field.

Ernst had returned to Paris by November 1833, but it was two concerts at Stoepel's Salons at the end of 1834 which marked the beginning of his Parisian celebrity. Critics noted his expressive power, his 'extraordinary facility on the instrument',<sup>5</sup> and the fact that he was beginning to throw off the influence of Paganini. Further concerts with some of the great musicians of the age – Chopin, Liszt, Rubini, Lablache – followed in quick succession; and a number of his early compositions began to acquire a reputation.

In late 1836 his ambition was fired by news that Paganini – who had retired from concert-giving for a year to run the orchestra at Parma – was returning to the stage with concerts in Nice and Marseilles. Ernst rushed to the first of these cities, and took up his old habit of spying on Paganini's practice and rehearsals. This eavesdropping, amongst other things, ensured he was able to give a fine account of Paganini's unpublished *Moses* variations when the two violinists were competing in Marseilles early in the New Year. The balance of power had now shifted in Ernst's favour. Illness had reduced Paganini's confidence on the fingerboard and exacerbated his rapaciousness, and his audience became both disappointed and alienated. Ernst, on the other hand, was in excellent violinistic condition and demonstrating his ability to win-over all comers. Partly through illness and partly through evident unpopularity, Paganini gave only two concerts before retreating to his hotel room, and Ernst was able to report a major victory.

With this triumph, Ernst's *Glanzzeit* began. From 1837 to 1840, he toured through France, Holland, Germany and the Austrian Empire, playing with Mendelssohn and Clara Schumann and enjoying particular success in Brünn and Vienna. In the latter, he entirely eclipsed the success of de Bériot, and saved the young Joachim's career: the boy's father had been told his son's bowing was too stiff for a concert violinist, but Ernst assured him that Joachim was remarkably talented, and any problems could quickly be cured by taking lessons with Böhm. Ernst consolidated his triumphs in Paris (where he faced stiff competition from Vieuxtemps) in 1841, and then toured through Germany, Poland, the Low Countries – where he gave his first concert with Berlioz – and Scandinavia.

In 1843–44 he made highly successful tours of England, and gave several important early performances of Beethoven's late quartets; and in 1845–46 his performances in Germany, Hungary and Austria included several dazzling concerts with Liszt. He fulfilled a long held ambition by playing in Moscow and St Petersburg in 1847, but while he was returning through Denmark, the 1848 Revolution broke out in Paris and rapidly spread

<sup>5</sup> *Gazette musicale de Paris*, 28 December 1834, p. 427.

throughout Europe. It brought musical life to a standstill. Ernst retreated to his brother's house in Brünn, where he remained for nearly a year. Although elated by ten years of almost unprecedented success, he was now exhausted by travel and concert-giving; and an illness which severely affected his playing – particularly his intonation – began to manifest itself in an acute and debilitating form. In spite of his family's love and support, the town did not prove an ideal place to recuperate: the Viennese counter-revolution was one of the bloodiest in Europe, and its shockwaves were felt all too clearly in nearby Brünn.

Even a year after revolution broke out, the only major European country with a normal musical life was England, and in 1849, Ernst – along with Hallé, Chopin, Sivori and many other musicians – headed for its shores. He travelled by way of Weimar, performing the 'Kreutzer' Sonata with Liszt, and remained in Britain for most of the next two years. This move brought notable changes in the pattern of his musical life. He composed much less, and began to play what the nineteenth century called 'Classical' works at his popular concerts, giving his first performances of the Mendelssohn and Beethoven concertos in 1849 and 1851 respectively. Above all, chamber music started to play a significantly larger role in his repertoire, and his presence as leader ensured the success of several important new chamber music societies – the Beethoven Quartet Society and Musical Union in London, and the Manchester Classical Chamber Concerts.

By the beginning of 1852, he was able to return to Paris, and it was while giving concerts there that he met his future wife, the Jewish actress and poet Amélie-Siona Lévy. She was a protégé of the poet and critic Théophile Gautier, and had made a considerable impression at the Odéon. But following a vision of the Virgin Mary her brother had entered a Catholic religious order, and she had renounced the stage, thinking of following in his footsteps. The meeting with Ernst curtailed this ambition, and she and the violinist (along with her mother as chaperone) were soon touring through Switzerland and the south of France. He performed his normal crowd-pleasers, she recited a judicious selection of prose and poetry, and the combination proved both unusual and popular.

But fashion was turning against Ernst. The public in major European cities was becoming bored with the kind of music he composed – virtuoso pieces largely based on French and Italian operas – and German critics began to disapprove of improvisation, rewriting music to suit one's own purposes, and playing anything but music by acknowledged masters. Ernst did not find this outlook natural, and after his marriage in 1854, he chose to spend most of his time in England, where a clique of powerful critics had managed to hold advanced ideas at bay. Consequently, the arrival of both Berlioz and Wagner to conduct in London in 1855 caused a furore, but Ernst – who was not doctrinaire in his outlook – performed successfully under the direction of both men.

Nature was also causing problems. Ernst's illness – probably a rare disease called acute intermittent porphyria, which contemporary medicine could neither diagnose nor cure – was growing worse, and making some of his performances desperately uneven. It had caused him problems for twenty years, but in July 1857 he was forced to retire, and by the early 1860s he was in a truly pitiable condition – crippled, yellow, depressed, skeletal and frequently in terrible pain.

Matters were made worse by lack of money: he had earned prodigious amounts, but given most of it away to his family, friends and charitable causes; and Amélie could not work because she had to spend all her time nursing him. Fortunately, his melancholic, humorous and sympathetic character inspired generosity, and during his final years, Brahms, Joachim, Wieniawski, Hallé and other eminent musicians raised considerable sums for him through benefit concerts, often by performing Ernst's own compositions.

From 1858 onwards he lived largely in Nice, although he spent long periods in Vienna, Brünn and various spas, desperately seeking a cure. With the end of his playing career, and in spite of debility, he returned to serious composition and completed a Mendelssohnian string quartet by the middle of 1862. Towards the end of the same year, he and Amélie befriended the celebrated novelist Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, and he brought the couple to England so Ernst could benefit from the spa baths at Malvern. They largely stayed with Bulwer for the next 14 months, during which time Ernst completed his *Polyphonic Studies*, and a second – and substantial parts of a third – string quartet. Despite declining health, he was able to attend the enthusiastic premiere of the second quartet at a Monday Popular Concert in St James's Hall in June 1864.

On his way back to Nice a few months later, he enjoyed two private performances of the quartets in Paris – even playing the viola part at one of the concerts – but by this stage he was clearly dying. Enduring the most appalling suffering, he lingered for another year, and finally died at 2 o'clock in the afternoon on 8 October 1865. He was buried in the Castle Cemetery in Nice, indicating that, at some point in his final years, he had converted to Catholicism.

### *Fantaisie brillante sur la Marche et la Romance d'Otello de Rossini, Op. 11*

Most opera-based instrumental works from the early nineteenth century have titles like 'Variations on ...' (if they are based on one theme) or 'Potpourri' (if they are based on several). But by the 1830s the idea that instrumental composers could simply raid operas for popular tunes, was giving way to the notion that an instrumental fantasia could record one artist's response to another's work, and so one begins to find more Romantic and subjective titles like 'Souvenir of ...', 'Reminiscences of ...', even 'Anticipations of ...'; and the hugely popular pianist-composer Sigismond Thalberg (1812–71) regularly began his operatic fantasies with extended introductions based on melodies of his own composition.

Ernst's 'Otello Fantasy' develops this trend. Rather than write a set of variations on one theme from the opera, or butt-join several sets of variations together, he invents a new and satisfying symphonic form for his composition: introduction [1], march [2], two variations [3], [4], romance [5], third variation [6], reminiscence of the introduction [7], finale [8]. And he also composes rather more of the thematic material than one might anticipate from the title: the lyrical theme which dominates the introduction and its reminiscence are entirely his own work; and the finale – although loosely based on an aria from Act 2 ('Fra tante smanie': 'Among many yearnings') and a rhythmic idea from bar 91 of the overture – is largely his own composition. The listener can

thus respond to Rossini, as it were, through the prism of Ernst's consciousness: he has grouped and integrated the Rossinian elements in a highly individual way, and his recurring theme introduces and guides his audience through them.

He wrote the *Fantasy* in 1837–38, soon after his competition with Paganini in Marseilles, and gave its first performance at the Salle Chantierine in Paris on 1 March 1838. The extreme virtuosity shows the influence of Paganini clearly enough, but Ernst's personality still moulds and tempers the technicalities. The use of high positions on the middle strings is more characteristic of the younger man, as is the polyphonic double-stopping in the violin statement of the march theme. In addition, Paganini's characteristic intensity and devilry have given way to the expressivity of the Romance and the high-spirited, innocent exuberance of the finale.

Ernst was clearly proud of his work: he dedicated it to his beloved teacher Joseph Böhm, and it remained a cornerstone of Ernst's repertoire until the end of his career. Others valued it too: the young Joseph Joachim played it everywhere; Mendelssohn loved the leap up to the high C sharp just before the running semiquavers in the finale, and borrowed the effect for the last movement of his own violin concerto;<sup>6</sup> and it is the only operatic fantasy by Ernst to maintain a place, albeit a minor one, in the repertoire throughout the twentieth and early 21st century. It is thus the earliest multi-themed fantasia for violin and orchestra which is still played with some regularity; its competitors, Weiniawski's 'Faust Fantasy' and Sarasatè's 'Carmen Fantasy' date from about 1860 and 1883 respectively, and neither can boast the formal innovations of Ernst's composition.

### *Boléro*, Op. 16

Beethoven and Weber had written early examples of boleros, but national dances grew in popularity as Romanticism became more patriotic, and Auber, Chopin and Halévy had made the bolero popular in 1830s Paris. Ernst's composition from 1842 <sup>[9]</sup> is notable for a wistful main theme, a charming second subject in the major (the yearning second phrase of which is enhanced by some subtle chromatic harmony in the piano), and the tastefully mercurial flourish with which it ends. Ernst dedicated the piece to Heinrich Panofka, a fellow pupil of Mayseder's from Vienna who achieved considerable success as a violinist (indeed, he gave the first recorded performance of Ernst's *Elegy*), but eventually found lasting fame and influence as a singing-teacher.

### *Deux Romances (sans paroles)*, Op. 15

First published in 1841, these pieces recall what was rapidly becoming one of Ernst's most successful compositions – the *Elegy*, Op. 10, published three years before. Like the *Elegy*, the first section of each *Romance* is in a minor key, with the second section in the major; and like the *Elegy*, the impassioned and lyrical double-stopping of the second section subsides to a quiet and understated conclusion. But Ernst is careful to avoid repetition: the *Elegy*

<sup>6</sup> Ernst's leap from an E to a high C sharp occurs 15 bars before the end of the *Fantasy*; Mendelssohn's similar leap is found 42 bars before the end of the last movement of his concerto.

is tragic whereas the first *Romance* – in G minor, *Allegretto molto cantabile* [10] – is wistful, and the second – also in G minor, *Agitato ma non allegro* [11] – slightly nervous. Moreover, only the first *Romance* has a piano epilogue, and the military rhythm of the final section of the second is not found in the first *Romance* or the *Elegy*.

The *Romances* are dedicated to Ernst's colleague Auguste Franchomme, the most famous French cellist of his day, who would later accept the dedications of both Chopin's and Alkan's cello sonatas. Ernst probably recalled the sound of Franchomme's instrument as he composed, since the title page indicates that both pieces can also be performed on the cello.

### *Souvenir du Pré aux Clercs: Grand Duo pour Piano et Violon par Ernst et Schuncke*

Ferdinand Hérold's *Le Pré aux Clercs* ('The Clerks' Meadow'),<sup>7</sup> the composer's last completed work, was premiered at the Opéra-Comique on 15 February 1832. This tale of love and high politics in sixteenth-century Paris turned out to be hugely successful, and achieved 1,000 performances at the Opéra-Comique by 1871. It was thus natural for Ernst to choose it as the subject of a fantasy at the end of 1834, and it was equally natural for him to collaborate with the German-speaking but Paris-based pianist Charles Schunke (1801–39). The mania for virtuosity in Paris, coupled with the rapid development of piano and violin technique in the previous ten years, meant that only virtuosi could write music that showed off these instruments to the full; and collaborations were also a good way of cementing useful musical and social ties. Schunke, who had recently been appointed pianist to the French queen, was thus an ideal compositional partner, and Ernst shows his tact both in sanctioning the order of instruments in the title, and allowing the piano the lion's share of the virtuosity.

The two composers premiered their duo at Stoepel's Salons on 23 December 1834, and then repeated it at the Opéra-Comique on Christmas Day. As befits two droll young men enjoying their talents and celebrity, it is a romp full of winning lyricism, exuberant motor rhythms and outrageous virtuosity. The main theme of the introduction is taken from the one section of the opera which is still occasionally performed, the opening of Act II which turns into the soprano aria 'Jours de mon enfance' ('Days of my Childhood') [12]. Hérold wrote an obligato violin part for the original aria; but in the duo, Ernst and Schunke give the violin a decorated version of the soprano line and place most of the filigree ornamentation in the piano. The theme for the set of variations which forms the main body of the duo is the male lead's aria 'O ma tendre amie' ('Oh, my gentle friend') from Act I [13]–[16], and then a joint cadenza and an andante of their own composition [17]–[18] lead into the final gallop from Act III, 'C'en est fait le Ciel même a reçu nos sermens' ('It's done – heaven itself has received our prayers') [19]. The tempo-changes and joint cadenza require the closest possible communication between the performers, and one can well imagine how early audiences would have enjoyed the smiles, nods, and other signals which must have passed between the corpulent, seated Schunke and the reed-thin, standing Ernst.

<sup>7</sup> Le Pré aux clercs is the name of a place in Paris opposite the Louvre.

### *Pensées fugitives, par Heller et Ernst*

The Hungarian pianist Stephen Heller (1813–88), who had come to Paris in 1837, was rather at odds with the prevailing musical climate. Exploited as a *Wunderkind* in his youth, he had suffered a nervous breakdown and developed a deep suspicion of virtuosos and virtuoso music. As Parisians in the 1830s and '40s were obsessed with such music, it is small wonder that he had difficulty making his name and earning a living. The origin of the *Pensées fugitives* ('Fleeting Thoughts') lay in Ernst's desire to help Heller financially, and make his evocative small-scale compositions known and appreciated. The violinist's charm, it would seem, was sufficient to break through Heller's settled hostility to virtuosos.

The two men probably began their collaboration in 1839. Some of the melodic ideas certainly come from Ernst: for example, one of his autographs – from 1833, four years before he met Heller – contains the opening bars of No. 5, *Agitato*. But it was Heller, undistracted by concerts and touring, who supplied most of the ideas and did most of the compositional work. In consequence, and as the order of the composers in the title indicates, the final pieces contain more Heller than Ernst: each piece has a poetic title and epigraph designed to induce a certain kind of mood (devices which Ernst does not use elsewhere);<sup>8</sup> and, in contrast to the rather plain and understated violin part, the piano-writing is demanding and sophisticated (unlike the more functional piano parts Ernst had written up to this point).

When the whole set of twelve pieces was published in 1842, it was dedicated to their friend, the homeopathic doctor, David-Didier Roth (1810–85), a man from a Jewish background very similar to their own. Born in Cassovia in the Austrian Empire, he had studied medicine in Vienna, but found Paris much more welcoming to both Jews and homeopaths. He eventually numbered Chopin and Baron Rothschild amongst his clients, and established a European reputation with a string of well-received medical textbooks, including a nine-volume work on homeopathy. But medicine was only one of his accomplishments. He was deeply interested in music; invented a sequence of ingenious calculating machines; and built up an important collection of drawings and engravings, particularly by Dürer, which are now in the Louvre and Bibliothèque Nationale.

The first six pieces<sup>9</sup> are as follows (including individual dedications omitted from later editions):

No. 1, *Passé* [20]: *Poco agitato*, 3/4, D minor, dedicated to Dr Roth

Epigraph: *Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers les scènes passées / Je veux rêver et non pleurer* ('But why drag myself to scenes past / I want to dream, not to weep'), Lamartine, 'Le premier regret', *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, 1830<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The score generally gives only the epigraph and the author, not the detail of these notes.

<sup>9</sup> The rest of the series will be recorded in Volume Three in this series.

<sup>10</sup> The epigraph conflates (and slightly alters) four lines in Lamartine's original:

The wistful ardency of the first melody gives way to a consolatory triplet-dominated theme in the left hand of the piano, which is set against a bare accompaniment in the violin. This section leads to an unstable semi-recapitulation where sevenths subvert the B flat chords in the piano, and the second note of the theme can only rise to a G sharp rather than an A. True stability only arrives when the triplet theme reappears in D major, and this time a genuine partnership is established as the two instruments discuss the musical material together. The piece ends in the radiant repose of *sostenuto* D major chords.

**No. 2, *Souvenir*** [21]: *Allegretto con molto calore*, 9/8, A major, dedicated to Madame Montgolfier

Epigraph: ... *ce souvenir, Madame, / a-t-il comme en mon Coeur son rayon dans votre âme?* ('...does this memory, Madame, / illuminate your soul as it does my heart?'), Victor Hugo, *Les Voix Intérieures*, 1837

This extended piece seems less troubled than the first, but the opening melody still has unexpected F naturals in its second and fourth bars, and some of the modulations are chromatic and uneasy. It is only after the long Mendelssohnian middle section, where the music builds against a split octave E in the right hand of the piano, that a new theme banishes all chromatic anxieties, and the music heads for the calm of its A major close.

**No. 3, *Romance*** [22]: *Allegretto con moto*, 6/8, F major, dedicated to Madame Hallé

Epigraph: *Pourquoi me dire que j'étais charmante, / Si je ne devais pas être aimée?* ('Why tell me I was charming, / If I was not to be loved?'), Mme de Staël, *Corinne, ou l'Italie*, 1807

The four-bar phrases of the melody alternate between the pianist's left hand and the violin, before accompanying semiquavers herald the reappearance of the theme in altogether more heroic mould – horn-like chords in the pianist's left hand set against urgent semiquavers in the right. The violin takes up the new mood before the tension dissipates, and the piano points the way to amity and acceptance.

**No. 4, *Lied*** [23]: *Allegretto con moto*, 6/8, F major, dedicated to L. Rakemann

Epigraph: *La gaité chante dans mon Cœur* ('Gaiety sings in my Heart'), Victor Hugo, *Les Voix Intérieures*, 1837<sup>11</sup>

A fluid, sparkling, accompaniment begins in the first bar of the piano, and buoys up an untroubled lyrical melody until the end of the piece. Mendelssohn certainly knew the work: one can hear its influence in his famous *Lied*

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Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passées ?  
Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer ;  
Revenez, revenez, ô mes tristes pensées !  
Je veux rêver et non pleurer !

<sup>11</sup> Again, a slight adaptation of the original:

Un oiseau chante à sa fenêtre,  
La gaité chante dans son cœur.

*ohne Worte*, Op. 67, No. 4, written in 1844, and known as ‘The Bees’ Wedding’ in English-speaking countries. The outlines of the melodies, the apparently dotted rhythms, and several of the running passages in similar motion, have clear affinities. But this *Lied* is on a larger scale, and some of the writing is grander and more exultant and than anything found in Mendelssohn’s miniature. This amplitude is particularly clear from the unison semi-quavers in the piano (beginning at 2:16), played two octaves apart, and marked *a tempo con brio*.

**No. 5, *Agitato*** [24]: *Molto vivace*, 6/8, D minor, dedicated to Madlle Moscheles

Epigraph: *Va-t-en! Laisse ma main!* (‘Go away! Let go my hand!’), Mme Desbordes-Valmore, ‘*Ladieu du soir*’, *Idylles*, 1830

This *Agitato* makes an effective contrast with the two pieces which lie on either side, but after the fluent pleasures of *Lied*, it comes as something of a disappointment. The phrase-lengths are foursquare and predictable; the hints of counterpoint fail to blossom; and despite a persistent rhythm, rapid tempo and melodramatic left-hand grace-notes, it never quite generates the required excitement. The piece was one of the earliest in the set to be conceived, and no performance, however committed, can demonstrate that its inspiration is on a par with the others.

**No. 6, *Abschied*** [25]: *Con moto*, 4/4, D major, dedicated to Monsieur C. Hallé

Epigraph: *Es treibt Dich fort von Ort zu Ort. / Du weißt nicht mal warum, / Im Winde klingt ein sanftes Wort, / Schaust Dich verwundert um* (‘It drives you on, from place to place. / You don’t know why. / A gentle word sounds in the wind, / You look around in amazement’), Heinrich Heine, ‘*In der Fremde*’, 1831

If No. 5, *Agitato*, looks backwards, then that of *Abschied* looks around and ahead. The virtuoso piano-part, and the lyrical intensity of the double-stopping, suggest a Lisztian *Vision*; and the long lyrical melody – sometimes in octaves – together with ostinato figures in the piano, hint at textures found in the first and third of Dvořák’s *Four Romantic Pieces*, composed over three decades later.

***Variations brillantes sur un thème de Rossini*, Op. 4**

Based on the cabaletta ‘*Sorte secondami*’ (‘Fortune Favour Me’) from Rossini’s opera *Zelmira* (1822), this set of variations is probably Ernst’s first published composition (there appears to be no opus 1, 2 or 3, although some early editions of the *Two Nocturnes*, Op. 8, list them as Op. 1). It was probably written while Ernst was following Paganini through southern Germany in 1829–30, and he is first recorded as playing it at the Redoutensaal in Stuttgart in February 1830.

A lengthy and dramatic *recitativo* [26] precedes the catchy D major tune [27], and this is followed by three variations: in triplets with many thirds and sixths [28]; in similar motion counterpoint [29]; and in brilliant staccato semiquavers [30]. Two more variations complete the sequence: an expressive and highly decorated andante full of runs, cadenzas, decorations and general *floriture* [31] and a very demanding finale packed with triplet semiquavers,

awkward string-crossings, and extended runs in octaves and thirds<sup>[32]</sup>.

The whole piece is dazzling and effective, and it is a mystery why Ernst did not play it in his later career. One possible reason is that it is too much in Paganini's manner (the highly decorated slow sections, and the passage in double artificial harmonics in the second variation, are especially characteristic); another is that it is considerably longer and more technically demanding than Ernst's other compositions which use his standard introduction/theme/five-variations model.\*

*Mark W. Rowe is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of East Anglia. His biography, Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst: Virtuoso Violinist appeared from Ashgate, Aldershot, in 2008.*

\* I would like to thank Hugh Macdonald, Davide Rizza and Martin Anderson for help with these notes.

**Sherban Lupu**, born in 1952, studied at the Bucharest Conservatory with George Manoliu. While a student he centred throughout eastern Europe and performed on Romanian radio and television. He left Romania to study at the Guildhall School of Music in London with Yfrah Neaman and took lessons and masterclasses with Yehudi Menuhin, Henryk Szering and Nathan Milstein, as well as with Norbert Brainin of the Amadeus String Quartet and Sandor Vegh. He won prizes in numerous competitions such as the Vienna International, the Jacques Thibaud in Paris and the Carl Flesch in London. Subsequently he moved to the United States to study with Dorothy De Lay and, at Indiana University, with Josef Gingold and receive chamber-music coaching from Menahem Pressler. Sherban Lupu is currently professor of violin at the University of Illinois.

Appearing frequently as soloist in Europe and the United States, Lupu has performed the complete cycle of Beethoven sonatas with Menahem Pressler, but he specialises in the music of his native Romania and eastern Europe as well as the virtuoso Romantic repertoire. He has made solo appearances at the world's major concert halls, among them The Kennedy Center, Royal Festival Hall, the Gstaad and Aldeburgh Festivals and Carnegie Hall. His recordings include works by Ysaÿe, Bartók, Enescu, Wieniawski, Ernst, Stravinsky, Bloch and Ginastera for the ASV, Arabesque, Capstone, Continuum, Electrecord and Zephyr labels, and his recording of the Bach solo Sonatas and Partitas appeared on Electrecord. He has also recorded for the BBC. In collaboration with the composer Cornel Țăranu, Lupu finished and reconstructed the *Caprice roumain* for violin and orchestra by Enescu. That work, which he performed in a special concert at the World Exhibition 2000 in Hannover, has been released on an Electrocord CD.

Much in demand as a pedagogue, Sherban Lupu is a frequent member of international juries, has given numerous masterclasses and taught in the Czech Republic, England, Germany, Holland, Italy, Poland – where in July 2004 he received from the Ministry of Culture the Award for Outstanding Teaching – and Romania.

In 2000 Sherban Lupu received a life-time achievement award from the Romanian Cultural Foundation for his efforts to promote Romanian culture and music internationally, and in May 2002 he was given the prestigious Arnold Beckman Award from the Research Board of the University of Illinois towards the recording of the complete works for violin and piano by Béla Bartók. In November that year he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa by the Academy of Music G. Dima in Cluj (Romania) and in January 2004 the President of Romania conferred upon him the title of Commander of the National Order of Merit and Service for his worldwide musical and cultural activities. Since 2002 he has been Artistic Director of the International Festival ‘The Musical Citadel of Braşov’, Romania. In 2007 he received another Arnold Beckman Award from the Research Board of the University of Illinois and was awarded a doctorate *honoris causa* by the Al. I. Cuza University of Iaşi, Romania.

In September 2005, together with the Romanian Cultural Institute, Sherban Lupu published six volumes of previously unknown works for violin by George Enescu – all of them discovered, edited and arranged by Lupu himself – and since December of the same year he has been the Artistic Director of the George Enescu Society of the United States. For the academic year 2009–10 he was a Fulbright Senior Lecturer and also a recipient of the College of Fine and Applied Arts Creative Research Award at the University of Illinois.

**Ian Hobson**, pianist and conductor, enjoys an international reputation both for his performances of the Romantic repertoire and of neglected piano music old and new, and for his assured conducting from both the piano and the podium, renewing interest in the music of such lesser known masters as Ignaz Moscheles and Johann Hummel as well as being an effective advocate of works written expressly for him by contemporary composers, among them John Gardner, Benjamin Lees, David Liptak, Alan Ridout and Roberto Sierra.

Born in Wolverhampton in 1952 and one of the youngest-ever graduates of the Royal Academy of Music, Ian Hobson began his international career in 1981 when he won First Prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition. He studied also at Cambridge and Yale Universities. Among his piano teachers were Sidney Harrison, Ward Davenny, Claude Frank and Menahem Pressler; as a conductor he studied with Otto Werner Mueller, Denis Russell Davies, Daniel Lewis and Gustav Meier, and he worked with Lorin Maazel in Cleveland and Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood. A professor in the Center for Advanced Study at the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), Ian Hobson received the endowed chair of Swanlund Professor of Music in 2000.

He is a recording artist of prodigious energy, having to date amassed a discography of some sixty releases, including the complete piano sonatas of Beethoven and Schumann and a complete edition of Brahms’ variations for piano. In 2007, with the Sinfonia Varsovia, he recorded Rachmaninov’s four piano concertos and *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* for the Zephyr label in the dual role of pianist and conductor – an achievement no other performer has matched. In addition, he has recorded more than

twenty albums for the Arabesque label featuring the music of Clementi, Dussek and Weber, the complete piano sonatas of Hummel, the complete solo piano transcriptions of Rachmaninov, and *Hobson's Choice*, a collection of his favourite pieces exploring the multiple facets of virtuosity across the span of three centuries.

He has also been engaged in recording a sixteen-volume collection of the complete works of Chopin, also for the Zephyr label, having marked the composer's 200th birthday with a series of ten solo concerts in New York. In addition to the large body of work for solo piano, this recording series features his performances as pianist and conductor, with the Sinfonia Varsovia, in all of the works for piano and orchestra, as well as his collaboration as pianist with other artists in Chopin's chamber music and songs. In this edition there is around three-quarters of an hour of music by Chopin that has never been recorded before, making Ian Hobson the first ever artist to record the composer's entire *œuvre*.

In addition, Ian Hobson is a much sought-after jury-member for national and international competitions, among them the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (at the specific request of Van Cliburn himself), the Arthur Rubinstein Competition in Poland, the Chopin Competition in Florida, the Leeds Piano Competition and the Schumann International Competition.

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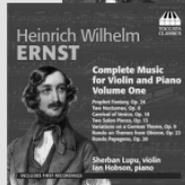
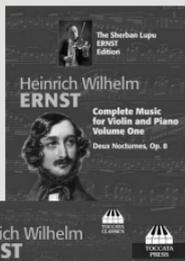
The first volume in the Toccata Classics complete recording of Ernst's violin music by Sherban Lupu and Ian Hobson has been received with superlatives from the musical press around the world.

‘The violin playing in Toccata's first volume devoted to the music of violinist Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst (1812–65) provides only one element in a very enticing package. Mark Rowe, whose biography of the violinist Ashgate Press published in 2008, wrote the voluminous notes, and Toccata has announced its intention to publish the sheet music (almost all of Ernst's works have been difficult to obtain) for each of the pieces in all the CD programs, edited by Sherban Lupu, who performs them. In addition, the disc contains 43 tracks, and each of the variations in the sets has one of its own, so readers of the notes can easily go to the precise locations that Rowe mentions – and he mentions quite a few.

[...] this collection makes available lots of new music in highly appealing and, where appropriate, highly entertaining performances. With its close and detailed recorded sound, its sympathetic collaboration between violinist and pianist, and its exploration of the music of a central figure in the history of violin playing (and, in the note, that figure himself), both specialists and nonspecialists should find something of interest. Urgently recommended to all sorts of listeners. ’

‘Editor's Choice’ *Gramophone*

The Sherban Lupu ERNST Edition begins with a new edition of the *Deux Nocturnes*, Op. 8. Details at [www.toccataclassics.com](http://www.toccataclassics.com) and [www.toccatapress.com](http://www.toccatapress.com)



Robert Maxham, *Fanfare*



Recorded in the Foellinger Great Hall of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts,  
University of Illinois, on 4, 5, 11 and 12 October 2010.

Producer: Samir Golescu

Engineer: Frank Horger

Booklet text: Mark Rowe

Design and layout: Paul Brooks, Design and Print, Oxford

Thanks to Jon Frohnen for supplying the music



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and Applied Arts of the University of Illinois for the funding of this project

Executive Producer: Martin Anderson

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# ERNST Complete Music for Violin and Piano, Volume Two

<b>Fantaisie brillante sur la Marche et la Romance d'Otello de Rossini, Op. 11</b>		<b>13:31</b>	<b>Pensées Fugitives, Part I</b>		<b>17:38</b>
<b>1</b>	<i>Introduzione: Andante non troppo</i>	3:07	<b>20</b>	No. 1 <i>Passé: Poco agitato</i>	3:19
<b>2</b>	March: <i>Allegro moderato</i>	1:15	<b>21</b>	No. 2 <i>Souvenir: Allegretto con molto calore</i>	4:23
<b>3</b>	Variation I	1:34	<b>22</b>	No. 3 <i>Romance: Allegretto con moto</i>	2:12
<b>4</b>	Variation II	1:40	<b>23</b>	No. 4 <i>Lied: Allegretto con moto</i>	3:02
<b>5</b>	Romance: <i>Andante</i>	2:36	<b>24</b>	No. 5 <i>Agitato: Molto Vivace</i>	1:29
<b>6</b>	Variation III: <i>Moderato</i>	1:20	<b>25</b>	No. 6 <i>Abschied: Con moto</i>	3:13
<b>7</b>	<i>Tempo dell' introduzione</i>	0:30			
<b>8</b>	Finale: <i>Più mosso</i>	1:29			
<b>9 Boléro, Op. 16: Allegretto</b>		<b>7:29</b>	<b>Variations brillantes sur un thème de Rossini, Op. 4</b>		
<b>Deux Romances, Op. 15</b>		<b>5:55</b>	<b>26</b>	<i>Introduzione: Andante</i>	2:42
<b>10</b>	No. 1 <i>Allegretto molto cantabile</i>	2:19	<b>27</b>	<i>Tèma</i>	1:22
<b>11</b>	No. 2 <i>Agitato ma non allegro</i>	3:36	<b>28</b>	Variation I	1:38
<b>Souvenir du Pré aux Clercs</b> (with Charles Schunke)		<b>17:32</b>	<b>29</b>	Variation II	2:16
<b>12</b>	<i>Introduzione: Andante</i>	3:01	<b>30</b>	Variation III	2:10
<b>13</b>	<i>Tèma: Lento</i>	1:12	<b>31</b>	Variation IV: <i>Andante assai</i>	3:50
<b>14</b>	Variation I: <i>Ritenuto</i>	1:04	<b>32</b>	Variation V: <i>Più mosso, con molto fuoco</i>	3:39
<b>15</b>	Variation II	1:20			
<b>16</b>	Variation III	1:04			
<b>17</b>	Cadenza	1:44			
<b>18</b>	Andante	2:17			
<b>19</b>	Finale	5:50			



Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst (1812–65) was one of the leading musicians of his day, a friend of Berlioz, Chopin, Liszt and Mendelssohn, and for Joseph Joachim ‘the greatest violinist I ever heard’. But the popular encore pieces by which Ernst is remembered today represent only a fraction of his output. This second CD – in a series of six presenting his complete violin works for the first time – combines brilliant display and expressive melody: the *Otello* Fantasy and Rossini Variations show Ernst developing Paganini’s inheritance, and the *Boléro*, *Two Romances* and *Pensées fugitives* show why he was such a favourite in Parisian salons.



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26	<i>Variations brillantes sur un thème de Rossini, Op. 4*</i>	17:37

TT 79:56

Sherban Lupu, violin  
Ian Hobson, piano

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