



Ottorino RESPIGHI

COMPLETE PIANO MUSIC, VOLUME TWO: ORIGINAL PIANO WORKS II

PRELUDIO CON FUOCO IN B FLAT MINOR
ALLEGRO DA CONCERTO IN B MINOR
FUGA REALE A 3 VOCI IN C MAJOR
SCHERZO IN B FLAT MAJOR
SUITE NO. 1 IN G MAJOR
SONATA IN A MINOR
PRESTO IN F MAJOR
SEI PEZZI

Giovanna Gatto

OTTORINO RESPIGHI: MUSIC FOR PIANO, VOLUME TWO

by Potito Pedarra and Giovanna Gatto

As with Volume One of this first-ever complete survey of Respighi's piano music, this second instalment includes a previously unknown sonata, only recently published, as well as a work published shortly after its composition, and a number of isolated works from Respighi's early years, some of which have been completed by the performer here, Giovanna Gatto.¹

As far as is currently known, the **Sonata in A minor, p004b**, represents Respighi's first work for piano. The year of its composition is not certain, but it was most probably written before the Sonata in F minor, which dates from 1897, and so it is assumed to have been written in 1895–96. Following tradition, both works are in classical sonata form with three movements – a slow movement situated between two lively outer movements, each of which is built on two themes and falls into three sections; both, with some exceptions, are also quite traditional tonally. Piera Anna Franini states that Respighi's starting point was Martucci, one of the promoters of a renewal of interest in instrumental music and an enthusiast of the German tradition in Italy, and that he 'wrote his first piano works as the result of a youthful, unrealistic adherence to a late-nineteenth-century culture.'² Like Brahms, he saw the connection with the past as being expressed in the choice of genre and immediately set himself such a task by writing in sonata form, specifically the Sonata in A minor. At this early stage his piano-writing leans on the model of Schumann, and the harmony owes a good deal to Chopin.

¹ Toccata Classics TOCC 0405 presented the Sonata in F minor, p016 (1897–98), the three *Andantes* in F major, p006 (1896), E major, p006a (1896; compl. Giovanna Gatto) and D major, p007 (1896), the *Preludii* in B flat minor, p043, and D minor, p043a (both 1903), the Toccata in D Dorian, p105b (1916), and the *Tre preludi su melodie gregoriane*, p131 (1921).

² Piera Anna Franini, 'Il pianoforte nel primo Respighi', in Potito Pedarra (ed.), *Il pianoforte nella produzione giovanile di Respighi*, Rugginenti, Milan, 1995, pp. 189–97.

In his inexperience he exaggerates the dialectic of tension/relaxation and the dramatic character of the episodes: some calm oases alternate with sudden passionate explosions in the outer movements, and magniloquent gestures in their closing sections. Only the *Andantino*, which has a more intimate character, is devoid of the spectacular tone that characterises the entire composition. The continuous changes in expressive colour within each episode are not necessarily, or not only, because of compositional variation, but rather owing to the instability of the harmonic texture. The first theme of the initial *Allegro* is proof: here the right hand delivering the melodic line and the figuration in semiquavers proceeds unaltered for the entire exposition of the theme, but takes on different colours as it shifts from one tonality to the other.

This first sonata, although burdened by its distinct oratorical tone, prefigures various technical and stylistic traits which will develop during the long process of Respighi's growth as a composer. First is a taste for the thematic-melodic line favouring the middle register. The free handling of tonality does not compromise the melody, which, even when ornamented, is never overpowered. Chords, so frequent in Respighi's piano-writing, are not conceived vertically, as sound blocks, but rather as a support to the melody. Finally, the writing avoids acrobatics; where there is a virtuosic passage, it is never boisterous but rather serves an expressive goal.

The first movement of the Sonata in A minor, *Allegro moderato* [1], opens with an introduction in which the dominant is played alone, *forte*, as an octave in a very low register, followed immediately by both hands charting a long descent beginning three octaves higher and making its way back to this register, at first in complete chords, the right hand doubling the left an octave higher, then later in double octaves. When the original pitch has been reached, the section ends with a dominant seventh chord on an accented quaver. Thus one arrives at the first theme, in which the right hand plays continual semiquaver arpeggios, the first note of each beat being also a crotchet, producing a melodic theme reminiscent of Schumann.

A long bridge leads to the second thematic area, in C major. The tranquil melody, which is lightly balanced by a counter melody, is spelled out over a relentless

configuration of sextuplets which will sink deep in the dark area of the keyboard in the exposition coda.

A large development section follows. Here different thematic elements alternate, with the first theme 'elaborated and pushed to more sumptuous sonorities,'³ as well as elements from the introduction and the coda. After the recapitulation of the two themes, the first in A minor and the second in A major, the *Allegro moderato* ends with a *Presto* episode.

The second-movement *Andantino* [2] represents the lyrical oasis of the sonata, a lullaby in F major based on two thematic episodes, repeated with variation and ending in an abridged reprise, thus following the structure ABA'B'A". The soft, singing elegy of theme A, similar to Schumann's 'Stückchen' (No. 5 of the *Album für die Jugend*, Op. 68), with the addition of repetitive and meandering *fin-de-siècle* passages, is followed by the B episode, a melody with outbursts of passion and abandon played by the right hand over a chromatic countermelody in the left.

The last movement, an *Allegro vivace* [3], combines rapid explosions with the idea of a scherzo – similar to that in C minor for violin and piano composed by the young Johannes Brahms – with the two themes and the modulating development of a sonata form typical of any last movement. The first theme 'recalls Schumann once again in its military tone characterised by wide chords,'⁴ specifically the third movement of his Piano Concerto, Op. 54, also in A minor. The agile and vigorous opening is followed by a more open melody over a simple accompaniment, which recalls that of the second theme in the first movement.

First and second themes, codettas and some nervous tremolos in the bass appear in the central development section, but then they are immediately blocked. This atmosphere of heavy tension is alleviated with the final re-exposition of the thematic motifs. Respighi surprises the listener with an unexpected ending: a fugato based on

³ Sergio Martinotti, 'La musica per pianoforte di Respighi', in Giancarlo Rostirolla and Elio Battaglia (eds). *Ottorino Respighi*, ERI, Turin, 1985, p. 173.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

the first theme of the first movement. Like a frame around the painting, it creates ‘a lost consistency [...] from diverse, heterogeneous thematic material.’⁵

The *Fuga reale a tre voci in C major*, P023a [4], was originally conceived as a *Fuga vocale* on a pre-existing theme and is dated 4 November 1898. This piece was the test for admission to the fourth year of the Counterpoint and Fugue class held by Cesare Dall’Olio⁶ at the Liceo Musicale in Bologna, where Respighi studied from 1894 to 1900.⁷ In the 2002 published edition, edited by Andrea Macinanti, the *Fuga* is presented ‘in a sort of *tablature* [...], so that the piece could be played on the organ.’⁸ But it seems clear that the *Fuga* can be played on the piano as well, considering both the lack of any indication of instrument by the composer and the pitch-range and writing of each voice. When performing the *Fuga* on the piano rather than the organ, the use of the middle pedal in the last bars of the *stretti* brings out the C major pedal point.

The discovery of these pieces from Respighi’s school years constitutes a source of endless fascination for anyone interested in his development as a composer for the piano. The *Fuga* is his last piano composition from 1898; only a few months earlier (August 1898) he had already composed some strikingly intense pieces, such as the *Preludio con fuoco* in B flat minor, P023 [13]. Although the *Fuga a tre voci* is academic in nature and bears amendments annotated by Dall’Olio, it allows the listener to form a more complete idea of the path undertaken by the teenage composer.

The *Presto in D minor*, P004d [5], although recorded in the Pedarra catalogue as following the Scherzo in B flat major, P004c [12], does not present the same clarity in either the writing or the structure. Formally, it can be considered more as a *Fantasia*, where the different episodes follow one another logically and yet without conforming to a rigid structure. Some thematic ideas in this composition, which one might also call

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Dall’Olio (1859–1906), a native Bolognese, enjoyed some success as an operatic composer: his first opera, *Ettore Fieramosca*, was well received on the occasion of its premiere, in Bologna in November 1875, and his second, *Don Riego*, was given a rapturous reception when produced in Rome in November 1880.

⁷ Andrea Macinanti, *Ottorino Respighi, Pagine di Scuola 1894–1900* (Arte organaria e organistica No. 43), Carrara, Bergamo, 2002, p. 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*

a *Presto-Fantasia*, were to be recomposed and developed in later piano works. Respighi uses the introduction to the third thematic idea in A minor as a starting material for the 1897 Sonata in F minor, p016, recorded in the first volume of this project. Similarly, some pianistic gestures, such as the rapid alternation of the right and left hands in semiquaver quadruplets leading to the final cadence of the first thematic idea, appear repeatedly in the 1903 *Preludio* in D minor, p043a, also in Volume One.

The unfinished nature of the *Presto-Fantasia* appears even more clearly when compared with the writing of both the Scherzo and the contemporaneous *Andantes*: some bars are merely outlined, and there are many erasures. In order to make the *Presto-Fantasia* internally consistent and performable while maintaining the raw style of the young composer, some bars that were unclear had to be carefully reconstructed and some accidentals that were not explicitly indicated added as required. From a formal point of view, the refrain signalled with a thick mark at the end of the composition – although without any indication of where the repetition should start – has been considered as a *Da capo al fine*, identifying as *Fine* the final D minor cadence of the first thematic episode.

The last days of 1896 bring several unpublished compositions, the last of which is the ***Allegro da concerto in B minor, p010*** [6]. It is another of the pieces where there is no doubt as to when it was composed: it is dated 29 December 1896 – it was one of the piano works that Respighi composed on a weekly basis at the end of 1896. It was a fertile period, the music he wrote then showing spontaneity and compositional ease. This *Allegro*, which recalls Schumann very directly, was undoubtedly meant for the concert hall. It is composed of two thematic elements. The first, of a restless character, is reminiscent of the whirling semiquavers opening Schumann's Sonata in G minor, Op. 22. The second theme is *cantabile* and in D major. In the furious run of semiquavers in the middle section one finds – for the first time in Respighi's piano-writing – a stringent dialogue between a motif delivered by the bass and a prompt reply from the treble, with a theme. The piece, characterised by insistent dynamic changes, by iridescent harmonies and by agitated episodes, finally unwinds in a soft lyricism typical of a Mendelssohn barcarolle.

The **Suite in G major, P022**, dated August 1898 in Respighi's manuscript, is a well-structured collection, although the fifth of its six (numbered) movements is missing. It was initially thought to consist of only four movements: the *Vivace*, *Tema*, *Sarabanda* and *Allegro con brio*, since the *Allegro con brio* has something of the character of a closing movement. When the sixth piece was found, in a manuscript containing the first four pieces, the Suite was understood to be made up of six movements, with the fifth somehow missing.

The Suite as a whole has elements of caricature, reminiscent of *Le astuzie di Colombina*, P130 (1920), an 'azione mimica' (pantomime) in two tableaux by Ileana Leonidov with music by Respighi, premiered under the title *Scherzo veneziano*.⁹ Indeed, the piano suite is so permeated with connections to the ballet that it can arguably be considered to have been the inspiration of the ballet itself.

The ironic, even grotesque, tone is immediately evident in the opening *Vivace* [7]. The first episode is vital and exuberant, characterised by eight rushing semiquavers culminating on the tonic, a sort of uncompromising leitmotiv. This episode is followed by five more, all (except for the last) introduced by the leitmotiv, which can therefore be seen as a sort of curtain revealing these playful scenes. The suspended atmosphere at the end of the six episodes recalls the typical comedic music of silent films.

Tema [8], the second piece, rather like an *Andantino* with a central trio, is based on the first motif, the theme, as indicated by the composer on the top of the page. It is a playful piece using archaic cadences and fragments of eighteenth-century dances. Gallant and affected, it is deliberately simple in its eight phrases with refrain and in the rigidity of its four-bar modules. By contrast, the lighter character of the trio highlights the ballet-like traits of the piece – contrasting Pantalon with Colombine.

The third movement, a *Sarabanda* [9], is the only movement not permeated by the bizarre spirit characterising the rest of the Suite. Instead, its expressivity attests to the fact that the interest in the past that shapes many of Respighi's mature works was already emerging in his years of apprenticeship. It was Luigi Torchi (1858–1920), his teacher

⁹ *Le astuzie di Colombina* was one of three ballets commissioned for the Ileana Leonidov Company in 1920, the other two being *Sèvres de la vieille France* and *La pentola magica*. All three incorporate existing materials.

at the Liceo ‘G. B. Martini’ in Bologna, who was responsible for Respighi’s orientation towards a ‘taste for the archaic style, developed through the ‘rediscovery of early music’ and the ‘assimilation of the “modes” found in that music.’¹⁰ In the middle section, this taste acquires the traits of a charming, decadent nostalgia. In its poised and solemn tone, this *Sarabanda*, too, foreshadows a section in *Le astuzie di Colombina*, where an annotation in the score indicates that ‘the third husband courts [Colombina] in a solemn and sumptuous way’.

In the short, jesting *Allegro con brio* [10], the tone of a caricature originates essentially from the juxtaposition of two opposing motifs. The first is demure, built on leaps of thirds and sixths over a pattern of repeated quavers in the bass – a typical gesture in ballet. The second motif is animated and extravagant, a sort of frantic *galop*. The reprise of the two motifs is preceded by a sixteen-bar *legato* episode beginning in C major. The *Allegro* ends bizarrely: after a *pp* repetition of the first theme in the lower octave comes a sudden, rapid ascending scale of semiquavers in *crescendo*, as if rebelling against the hesitant preceding phrase.

The sixth piece, a *Presto* in G major [11], in the style of a toccata, in $\frac{6}{8}$, is dynamic, fast and humorous, the vitality enhanced by the rhythmic patterns up to the fermata on the E flat in bar 32. This suspension introduces the middle section, where one finds some elements of the *Vivace*, attesting beyond doubt to the integrity of the Suite as a whole. Among these elements, a prominent position is occupied by the initial motif, which is declaimed at first, and then timidly enunciated through changes in timbre (the motif is *p*) and in harmony – the crotchet is raised by a semitone, contributing to the instability of the minor sixth G-E flat. Here the little theme of the last episode of the *Vivace* is repeated. After a short recitative culminating once more on an E flat, the music returns to its *Tempo I*, which finally fades into a *ppp*.

The **Scherzo in B flat major, P004C** [12], seems to have been composed in 1895–96. It was preserved in a polished manuscript intended to be definitive and ready for performance. At first glance, the Scherzo presents vivid orchestral writing, less pianistic

¹⁰ Alberto Cantù, *Respighi compositore*, EDA, Turin, 1985, p. 85.

and clearly reminiscent of Mendelssohn. The draft score is clean, free from erasures. Furthermore, Respighi uses a tripartite structure (ABA), the form he will also use in the three *Andantes* p006, p006a and p007, a trilogy contemporary with the Scherzo and recorded on Volume One of this project. The mid-section of the Scherzo is a Trio in E flat major – the fourth degree of the main tonality. The Trio starts with a chorale which is then interrupted by *legato* arpeggiated chords in contrary motion. The reprise of the Scherzo returns to rhythmic orchestral writing, decidedly reaffirming the tonality of B flat major. The final coda, built on an ascending series of full chords in the right hand supported by descending octaves in the left hand, is made even more convincing by many repetitions that determinedly reiterate the final cadence. The stamp of the Liceo Musicale ‘G. B. Martini’ in Bologna, which appears on the top margin of the *Andante*, p006, highlights the academic nature of the pieces composed in this period.

The ***Preludio con fuoco in B flat minor, p023*** (1898) 13, which has been preserved as a copy with visible corrections, shows some late-Romantic stylistic traits, expressed in a style of piano-writing reminiscent of Rachmaninov and Tchaikovsky. Two melodic lines above intricate, rapid broken arpeggios in semiquavers are all played by the right hand, with the little and ring fingers weaving a winding melodic line above them, while the left hand plays a syncopated accompaniment. The central section is interesting from a pianistic point of view, thanks to the skilful use of the right hand crossing over the left and because of the timbral possibilities of the instrument. A progressive *crescendo* explodes in a powerfully resonant climax. The dynamic ignition is marked by intense, poignant feeling, as in Rachmaninov, with a motif in peroration, expressed through a progression, leading to the main theme, which is transfigured through tempo (*ritardando*) and intensity (*ppp*), thus reaching a typically Impressionist delicacy.

Although the ***Sei pezzi per pianoforte, p044***, dating from 1903-5, have attracted some attention, Respighi never wrote a collection of six pieces for piano – neither in his years of apprenticeship nor later in life. It is clear that these *Six Pieces* were not conceived of as a unity, and that their inclusion inside the same set of covers depended almost exclusively on the publisher’s custom of publishing collections in groups of six or its

multiples; indeed, Respighi's contract with Francesco Bongiovanni detailed these pieces as separate compositions. By contrast, what survives of the (unfinished) *Suite*, p043, of 1903, manifests a stylistic unity lacking in this collection.

The *Six Pieces* at the same time complete the piano output of the younger Respighi and were his first works to be published. Although Giuseppe Piccioli dismissed them as 'lovely but insignificant compositions',¹¹ Sergio Martinotti felt that they reveal 'the birth of an unmistakable stylistic direction',¹² which would culminate in the *Tre preludi sopra melodie gregoriane*, composed on Capri in 1919, completed in 1921 and published the following year.

Respighi dedicated the first of the six pieces, the 'Valse caressante' [14], to Cesarina Donini Crema, probably as a tribute to his friendship with her husband, the author of the libretto of *Re Enzo* (1905), the first of Respighi's twelve operas. The adjective 'caressante' reveals the tone of the piece, gentle and delicate. There is a short introduction in an improvisatory style, which ends on an unresolved dominant-seventh chord followed by a fermata over a pause. The body of the 'Valse' itself follows the form of Chopin waltzes, ABACA. The A sections feature a bipartite theme. In the B section, the left hand carries the melody, suggesting a cello, and the C section has a folkloric character. A coda sounding like an exquisite music-box closes the last repetition of section A. This version for solo piano was preceded by one for violin and piano that was offered to Bongiovanni in late 1904, and it in turn was based on a piece for flute and strings.

Sergio Martinotti wrote of the 'Canone' [15]: 'The piano-writing, severe and contrite at the beginning, becomes agitated and finally ethereal, with lavish chords, showing an academic mannerism occasionally also found in Busoni'.¹³ In the opening *Andantino* section, where the atmosphere recalls Franck, a tender dialogue occurs between the melody and its canonic repetition in a lower octave. A motif in the second section is characterised by a pattern of pairs of slurred quavers, a very common sort of motif in

¹¹ Giuseppe Piccioli, 'Ottorino Respighi', *L'Arte pianistica in Italia da Clementi ai nostri giorni*, Pizzi, Bologna, 1931, p. 37.

¹² Sergio Martinotti, *Ottorino Respighi: Musica per pianoforte*, DUP891-CD, Duetto, Milano, 1987.

¹³ Martinotti, *loc. cit.*, p. 179.

Respighi. A brilliant *agitato* episode in E flat minor in $\frac{9}{8}$ then suggests Clementi's *Étude* No. 65 from the *Gradus ad Parnassum* before the return of the *Tempo 1*.

The 'Notturmo' [16], the best-known of these pieces, is different from the others, in both style of composition and the writing for the piano. The presence of a metronome marking at the beginning of the score is intriguing. In those years Respighi used only verbal tempo indications, which suggests an intervention by the publisher at some point when the Nocturne was reprinted – a testament to its popularity, the only one of these pieces to have featured often in piano recitals (even some by the young Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli). The Nocturne 'is clearly a gloss on Liszt, mediated through the lens of the French Decadent movement. It accentuates a liquid sonority through the insistent and intricate work of triplets within this soft harmonic texture, all of which is supporting a feeble melody made of evocative resonances.'¹⁴ The evocation of the magical atmosphere of night and dawn points forward to the first movement of the symphonic poem *Fontane di Roma*, 'La Fontana di Valle Giulia all'alba'. In the ethereal atmosphere recreated by the changing double thirds, a melancholic motif is heard. After long pauses on the median, tonic and dominant notes of the main tonality, the motif grows and then disappears immediately. An intense melody in the high register reminiscent of Puccini blossoms with arpeggio chords that characterise the entire middle section.

It is a broad fresco, rich in intimate moments as the harmony grows drier. The arpeggio chords, which are repeated every half-note, accumulate rhythmic energy, bringing in a new section (starting from bar 34). In the comfortable, square $\frac{4}{4}$ tempo, sonorous and *marcato* chords enunciate the motif like some kind of idealised fanfare. Soft, fluctuating semiquavers (sixteenth notes) in a rapid $\frac{12}{8}$ answer this motif. Sudden blasts of hemidemisiquavers (64th notes) prepare the cadenza leading to the coda. Echoes of the beginning evoke its enchanted and dream-like atmosphere.

His taste for archaism brought Respighi to write a 'Minuetto' [17] which, like the 'Valse caressante', has a dedicatee: Adele Righi, perhaps a member of the family of the renowned astrologist Augusto Righi, who was also a friend of Respighi's. It has its origins

¹⁴ Martinotti, *loc. cit.*, pp. 179–80.

in a *Minuetto per archi* ('Minuet for strings') dating back to 1903 (which in turn was included in the 1905 opera *Re Enzo*). The held notes in the bass, in the style of a musette, support a noble theme in G major reminiscent of Ravel. This theme has *marcato* on the third crotchet of each even-numbered bar, suggesting a *rubato*. The phrase is more dynamic in the second part, characterised by major triads reminiscent of Debussy. The archaic flavour of an episode marked *Poco più vivace* – which begins with a cascade of semiquavers – looks forward to the *Antiche danze per liuto* (especially the Third Suite). The Trio – *Un poco più mosso*, in C minor – is a delicate chiaroscuro. The theme is in a regular pattern of crotchets (quarter notes) in the bass, reminiscent of the *pizzicato* of a lute, and highlights the nostalgia of the piece. At the end of the trio there is a cadenza which leads back to the minuet.

Respighi dedicated his 'Studio' [18] to the countess Ida Peracca Cantelli from Parma, whose name also features in correspondence with Toscanini around the same time. In this study, a reflection on 'Chopin through the academic lens of Sgambati',¹⁵ Respighi tackles two technical issues: alternating sixths and hand-crossings. He exploits the registers and dynamic nuances of the instrument with a modern sensitivity, in writing suggestive of Debussy's (later) *Prélude* "Tièrces alternées".

The sixths create a confused fluctuation from which a timid melodic line emerges, gaining texture from bar 21, when the left hand creates a dialogue between treble and bass. The thick sounds of the mid- to low register in a murmuring *piano* in bar 21 are followed by a *crescendo* culminating in B flat major at bar 36. After this climax, the sound gets darker, and the motivic dialogue dissolves in a calm stream of sixths, reminiscent of the tranquillity of the sea.

Respighi was not particularly enthusiastic about his first opera, *Re Enzo*. Even so, he must have liked some of its passages, since he later decided to transcribe and present them as isolated pieces – as with the 'Intermezzo-Serenata' between the first and second tableaux of the Third Act, of which three versions are known: one for orchestra, one for chamber ensemble and one for piano [19]. These versions all lack the first ten bars of

¹⁵ Martinotti, *loc. cit.*, p. 180.

the operatic original, a graceful *Andante* characterised by wind-instrument and harp arabesques with violin tremolos. In the piano version the fluid melody unfolds on the tenderly waving line of the left hand, an accompaniment originally assigned to the string instruments. The theme, initially in the high area of the keyboard, becomes slowly more fluid as the result of triplets. Hints of this theme are crossed with a chordal motif in *forte*.

Potito Pedarra was the reference figure for Ottorino Respighi and his music, the scholar to whose work younger musicologists are all indebted. In the 1980s he became president of Accademia Musicale O. Respighi in Assisi. In 1984 Casa Ricordi and Elsa Respighi entrusted him with the task of researching and cataloguing Respighi's manuscripts, and in 1985 he became the editor of the Catalogue of the Works of Ottorino Respighi for the publisher ERI. In 1986 he began working on Respighi's Opera Omnia for the Fondazione Cini in Venice. From 1993 to 2000 he was editor of the magazine Civiltà Musicale. His publications include the Catalogo delle opere di Ottorino Respighi (ERI, Turin, 1985); Il pianoforte nella produzione giovanile di Respighi (Rugginenti, Milan, 1995); 'Musiche inedite per piccola orchestra', in Atti del Convegno di studio 'Respighi giovanile' (Rosetum, Milan, 1996); Elsa Olivieri Sangiacomo: la vita, le opere; Catalogo delle opere, Biblioteca Economica di Musicologia, Rosetum, Milan, 1998; 'Elsa Olivieri Sangiacomo: Due canzoni per chitarra' and 'Catalogo delle opere di E. O. Sangiacomo' in Elsa Respighi e il suo tempo. Verona e l'Italia nel Primo Novecento (Cierre Gruppo, Verona, 2015). At the time of his death – on 19 November 2020, a victim of Covid-19 – he was working on a new edition of the Catalogo tematico analitico della produzione musicale di Respighi (Rugginenti, Milan, 1995); the Opera Omnia collection of autograph manuscripts (Fondazione Cini, Venezia/Istituto Storico Germanico, Roma); and the vast Carteggi respighiani, an iconographic catalogue and other genealogical studies of the Respighi family from the sixteenth century onwards.

Originally from Milan, **Giovanna Gatto** is a dynamic and multi-faceted pianist, who enjoys exploring a wide range of musical styles. She divides her time between Berne, Berlin and Milan.

The first volume of this first-ever complete survey of the piano music of Respighi (Toccata Classics TOCC 0405) was met with enthusiastic reviews. Her discography also includes works by Akaiishi, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Debussy, Prokofiev and Ravel.

She graduated in Piano Performance from the Conservatoire of Piacenza, where she studied with Maria Grazia Petrali, and obtained a first-class Master's degree at the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Como, studying with Roberto Stefanoni. After attending postgraduate courses at the Accademia S. Cecilia in Bergamo with Konstantin Bogino, she obtained further Masters in Performance and Music Pedagogy with Patricia Pagny at the Berne University of the Arts. She complemented her piano studies with harpsichord, organ and fortepiano. She was also awarded a Bachelor's degree in the Economy of the Arts, Culture and Communication at the Bocconi University in Milan.

She has collaborated with the GAMO (Gruppo Aperto Musica Oggi) Ensemble and the Festival of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and performed numerous world premieres of contemporary music. She has performed at numerous other festivals in Italy and further afield in Europe – Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland – both as soloist and in chamber ensembles. The conductors with whom she has worked include Riccardo Bovino, Massimo Merone, Simone Ori and Christopher Warren-Green, and her concerto appearances have featured Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto, Mozart's Concertos K449 in E flat major and K466 in D minor and Bach's D minor Concerto. Her numerous awards in national and international competitions, both as soloist and in chamber music, include sponsorship by the Inner Wheel Rotary Club, and her research into Respighi's piano music won her sponsorship from the Irène Dénéreaz Foundation in Lausanne. This Respighi project allowed her to work closely with the leading Respighi authority, the late Potito Pedarra.



Photograph: Teresa Iaropoli

Another unusual interest is her work in developing new compositions and transcriptions for accordion and piano, resulting in a number of premieres, including works by Carlo Galante, Fergus Johnstone and Giorgio Colombo Taccani. The project attracted sponsorship from Pro Helvetia, Fondation Suisa and Swiss performers SIG during the Classical:NEXT music meeting in Rotterdam in 2018. With her brother, the composer and producer Vito Gatto, she has performed electronic reworkings of classical masterpieces – for example, Debussy's 'Clair de lune', released by Decca in 2017.

Giovanna Gatto is an active piano and chamber-music teacher at the Valais Music Academy/Allgemeine Musikschule Oberwallis (AMO) in Switzerland, and is professor of piano at the Conservatorio F. Vittadini in Pavia in Italy.



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The complete Italian version of the extensive text by Potito Pedarra from which
this booklet essay was translated can be found on the Toccata Classics website at
<http://toccataclassics.com/respighipianonotes2>.

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Executive Producer: Martin Anderson

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OTTORINO RESPIGHI Complete Piano Music, Volume Two

Sonata in A minor, P004b (1896)	21:44
1 I <i>Allegro moderato</i>	10:19
2 II <i>Andantino</i>	5:16
3 III <i>Allegro vivace</i>	6:09
4 Fuga reale a tre voci in C major, P023a (1898)*	3:07
5 Presto in F major, P004d (1896)*	2:32
6 Allegro da concerto in B minor, P010 (1896)	3:55
Suite No. 1 in G major, P022 (1898)	11:00
7 I <i>Vivace</i>	1:07
8 II <i>Tema: Andantino</i>	2:31
9 III <i>Sarabanda</i>	4:19
10 IV <i>Allegro con brio</i>	1:44
11 VI <i>Presto</i>	1:19
12 Scherzo in B flat major, P004c (1886)*	2:35
13 Preludio con fuoco in B flat minor, P023 (1898)	1:34
Sei pezzi per pianoforte, P044 (1903–5)	21:14
14 No. 1 <i>Valse caressante: Tempo lento di valzer</i>	4:25
15 No. 2 <i>Canone</i>	2:51
16 No. 3 <i>Notturmo: Lento</i>	5:06
17 No. 4 <i>Minuetto</i>	3:50
18 No. 5 <i>Studio: Presto</i>	1:56
19 No. 6 <i>Intermezzo-Serenata: Andante calmo</i>	3:04

Giovanna Gatto, piano

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*FIRST RECORDINGS