

THREE GENERATIONS

Chamber Music by Ivan, Alexander and Nikolai Tcherepnin



Quan Yuan, violin
Sue-Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin, flute
Ian Greitzer, clarinet
Donald Berman, piano
David Witten, piano

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

THREE GENERATIONS: CHAMBER MUSIC

BY IVAN, ALEXANDER AND NIKOLAI TCHEREPNIN

David Witten

This recording explores music by three generations of composers from the Tcherepnin family: Nikolai, Alexander and Ivan. Each of the three wrote a wide range of scores, from solo pieces and large ensemble works to operas and ballets. This album reveals the invaluable contribution the family made to chamber music, presenting pieces in a variety of styles and spanning 95 years. The exceptional works for violin and piano of Nikolai and Alexander have rarely been heard. The chamber music of Ivan is represented by early as well as later works for flute, clarinet and piano. Five of these works are recorded here for the first time.

Nikolai Nikolaievich Tcherepnin (1873–1945) is known especially for his ballet, choral, piano and symphonic music. The beautifully melodic chamber works heard here reveal yet another aspect of his compositional gifts. His son, Alexander (1899–1977), is the most prolific and widely published of the three Tcherepnin composers. Alexander had three sons, and the youngest, Ivan (1943–98), was a gifted composer of both traditional and electronic music. More recently, a fourth generation of Tcherepnin composers (two of Ivan's sons) are making their way in the world, so that the Tcherepnin family can truly be called a musical dynasty.

Nikolai Tcherepnin was a Russian composer, conductor and pedagogue, whose career followed on the heels of Pyotr Tchaikovsky and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. At the St Petersburg Conservatoire, Tcherepnin developed a flair for colourful orchestration through studies with Rimsky-Korsakov, his professor of composition. Tcherepnin's talents came to the attention of Sergei Diaghilev, who hired him as Principal

Conductor in the inaugural seasons of the Ballets Russes. Two of Tcherepnin's own ballets, *Le Pavillon d'Armide* and *Narcisse et Echo*, were featured in the 1909 and 1911 seasons, and both showcased the young, supremely gifted dancer Vaslav Fomich Nijinsky. Tcherepnin successfully maintained his musical roles as composer, conductor and teacher throughout his life, which afforded him a multitude of professional opportunities.

Nikolai Tcherepnin's *Poème Lyrique*, Op. 9 (1900) [7], the earliest piece on this recording, reveals its young composer as a late Romantic. Tcherepnin dedicated it to Viktor Grigorievich Walter (1865–1935), who served as first violinist in the Mariinsky Opera Orchestra in St Petersburg. When still in his twenties, Nikolai Tcherepnin meticulously studied scores by Tchaikovsky, Lyadov and Rimsky-Korsakov, composers whom he revered. To build intensity in his *Poème*, Tcherepnin uses rising sequences and

expressive appoggiaturas in both violin and piano. There are several emotional climaxes, emphasised by the push and pull of *rubato*. Although the work begins and ends in C major, Tcherepnin rarely settles into this key. He prefers restless searching for other tonalities, visiting but never cadencing in E flat major, E minor, C sharp minor, D flat major, F minor, A flat major and more. At the very centre of the piece (bar 124, 5:30),



Nikolai Nikolaievich Tcherepnin
(1873–1945)

he abruptly cuts off the music, and then quotes one of his own songs, ‘Twilight’, the last of the Four Songs, Op. 16 (published in 1903), which sets poems by Fyodor Tyutchev.¹

Tyutchev’s poetic descriptions of nature, love, melancholy and longing resonated with Tcherepnin, who set no fewer than fifteen of his poems to music. It is not known for certain whether his ‘Twilight’ or his *Poème Lyrique* came first. Clearly, Tcherepnin’s musical sensibilities were ideally suited to Tyutchev’s delicate verses. At this remarkable moment in the *Poème Lyrique*, the vocal melody of ‘Twilight’ is recast for violin, and its *espressivo* descent into shadowy bass tremolos in the piano perfectly reflects the atmosphere of Tyutchev’s poem. The opening stanza, in Elena Mindlina’s translation, reads as follows:

Blue-grey shadows are mingling;
Colour is growing dim;
Sound is fading.
Life and movement have drowned
Into the rippling dusk and distant hum.

In an autobiographical essay, Nikolai Tcherepnin wrote that the ‘*Poème Lyrique*, Op. 9, for violin and piano was [the] piece that brought my music to the attention of European musicians, since the list of my compositions in European music-reference books typically begins with it’. He further noted that the piece ‘was of interest to several violinists, including first of all the venerable [Leopold] Auer’.²

Nikolai Tcherepnin’s *Andante and Finale* for violin and piano was published posthumously; it was probably composed in 1943. The *Andante* [8] presents Impressionist ideas – there are some evocative suggestions of gently rippling water, created by lightly played broken octaves in the piano under modal motifs in the violin. They recall similar passages of earlier Tcherepnin, found in his *Sketches on the Russian Alphabet* from 1908.³

¹ Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev (1803–73) is considered a forerunner of Russian Symbolism. This Nikolai Tcherepnin song and 28 others are performed by Elena Mindlina and myself on Toccata Classics TOCC 0221.

² Nikolai Tcherepnin, *Under the Canopy of my Life*, unpublished autobiography in Russian, 1942, translated by John Ranck, www.tcherepnin.com/nikolai/memoirs_nik.htm, p. 45.

³ I recorded these pieces on a Toccata Classics anthology of Nikolai Tcherepnin’s piano music (TOCC 0117).

Specifically, one hears these sounds in his musical portraits of ‘The Forest’ (depicting rustling leaves) and in ‘The Lake’ (fluttering wings of swans). It is worth noting that when Tcherepnin was first fascinated by his youthful discovery of French Impressionist composers, his friends teased him with the nickname ‘Debussy Ravelevich’. As the *Andante* glides to an end, one finds delicate ninth chords that echo the opening of César Franck’s Violin Sonata.

For complete contrast, the *Finale* [9] of this work is a wild ride – a rollicking *Allegro risoluto marcato*. The themes sound like genuine Russian folksongs, though it is likely that Tcherepnin invented them. The violinist has the challenge of executing flying *spiccato*, high harmonics and *détaché* at lightning speed, and the pianist must imitate a variety of percussion instruments. Indeed, if this *Finale* were to be orchestrated, it would probably require a harmonica, a squeeze-box-style bayan, a brass ensemble, a penny whistle and a piccolo. In the best tradition of circus bands, the pace picks up even more in the last 30 seconds, bringing a final burst of exuberant energy.

In his biography of **Alexander Tcherepnin**, the Austrian-Swiss musicologist Willi Reich pronounced him a ‘musical citizen of the world.’⁴ Although Alexander maintained a home in Paris for more than half a century and lived primarily in the United States for his last 30 years, his background and culture were unmistakably Russian. He was a constant traveller during his long career, composing and concertising as a pianist not only in the major European and American capitals but also in less familiar places like the Soviet Caucasus region, China, Japan and Egypt. The international, cosmopolitan aspect of Tcherepnin’s life and career rightly informs much of the commentary about him by critics and colleagues. Yehudi Menuhin, for instance, called him a ‘distinguished composer, original in concept and expression, whose works reflect a synthesis of many cultures.’⁵ This recording begins with four of Alexander Tcherepnin’s pieces for violin and piano, each composed during the 1920s.

⁴ Willi Reich’s biography, along with extensive information not found elsewhere, is reprinted in Benjamin Folkman, *Alexander Tcherepnin: A Compendium* (1991/2008), ISBN 978-1006303-93-7, www.blurb.com, 2021, p. 75.

⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 130.

The *Romance* (1922), which bears no opus number [1], is presented here in Tcherepnin's original version for violin and piano (it exists also in a version for violin and small orchestra). The dedicatee was Viktor Grigorievich Walter, the same violinist to whom Nikolai Tcherepnin had dedicated his *Poème Lyrique*, some two decades earlier. By 1926, Walter had become a Professor of Violin at the Russian Conservatoire in Paris, which was founded by Nikolai Tcherepnin. In this *Romance*, the left hand of the piano plays a walking bass line, a descending major scale as implacable as the bass line in Bach's 'Air on the G String'. Against it, the violin executes a lyrical, mostly diatonic melody – and yet the right-hand piano accompaniment relies on intervals that suggest Tcherepnin's own six-note, 'hexachordal' scales. The result is beautifully haunting and mysterious.

Tcherepnin's hexachordal scale alternates half-step (semitonal) with one-and-a-half-step (minor-third) intervals (for example, C–D sharp–E–G–A flat–B–[C]). Tcherepnin was never shy about explaining his compositional methods. He wrote and talked about this scale many times during his life, the most satisfying explanation being found in his 21-page essay, 'Basic Elements of My Musical Language': 'Since my early youth I had the tendency and the urge to combine major and minor chords. Only a major-minor tetra/chord gave me the sensation of finality and of stability.'⁶

The *Élégie*, Op. 43, for violin and piano (1927) [2], was written immediately after Tcherepnin completed the short score of his monumental and innovative Symphony No. 1: 'Like a race horse after a long race, I was unable to stop the creative imagination, and to smooth it down, composed an Elegy for Violin and Piano.'⁷ The work is dedicated to Emanuel Roman Zetlin (1900–83), a Russian violinist who emigrated to the USA at a young age and became a member of the Curtis String Quartet. Tcherepnin and Zetlin gave various concerts together in the USA, among them the premiere of the

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 104. The entire essay is reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 89–106, and a large portion of it appears on the Tcherepnin Society website, at http://www.tcherepnin.com/alex/basic_elem1.htm.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

Élégie in New York in 1928. Sombre, even lugubrious, the music makes intense use of counterpoint, as well as Tcherepnin's own self-defined 'Interpoint'.⁸

Tcherepnin's Op. 11 (1921) is a set of five *Arabesques*, of which the first four are for solo piano; No. 5, the surprise final piece of the set, is for violin and piano [3]. It is dedicated to the Polish violinist and composer Paweł Kochański (1887–1934). The sparkling charm of this piece is displayed by playful, scherzo-like rhythms, along with Tcherepnin's own six-note scale.

The Violin Sonata in F major, Op. 14 (1921), is dedicated to Adila d'Arányi Fachiri (1886–1962). Adila and her younger sister, Jelly, both virtuoso violinists from Hungary, were great-nieces of the legendary violinist Joseph Joachim. They settled in London, where Adila and Alexander Tcherepnin premiered this sonata in a recital on 17 November 1922.

In the first movement, marked *Allegro moderato* [4], Tcherepnin adheres to the time-honoured sonata principle of presenting contrasting themes and tonal centres that are later reconciled. Here these themes are presented in the surprisingly distant key areas of F major and F sharp minor. The first theme is an active melodic line with a prominent syncopation, followed by a soaring lyrical second theme. As they are developed, Tcherepnin pits the traditional melodic minor scale in the violin against an actively motoric, hexachordal piano background. The contrasting themes, instruments and key areas finally settle their differences and conclude with a rousing arrival in F major.

The second movement, a *Larghetto* [5], is very serious in mood. Its texture is built from a contrapuntal 'trio', consisting of the right and left hand of the piano and the violin line. The intensity builds inexorably and finally reaches a dramatic *fortississimo*. The denouement is melancholic and moving – the tension unwinds, ultimately resolving into a comforting A major sonority.

⁸ Analogous to counterpoint ('point counter point'), Interpoint ('point inter point') exploits the available musical spaces between registers ('vertical Interpoint') and/or rhythmic pulses ('horizontal Interpoint'), as well as those created by superimposed metres ('metrical Interpoint'). All three procedures, of course, can be combined. Tcherepnin's 'Basic Elements of My Musical Language' (in Folkman, *op. cit.*, pp. 96–98) provides more information.

For the *Vivace* third movement [6], Tcherepnin brings back the syncopated theme of the first movement but in a jokier manner. The ensuing high jinks and virtuosity are interrupted by a Russian dance. A trade-off of *pizzicato* (violin) against *staccato* (left-hand piano) then ensues, which paves the way for an eventual return to familiar themes. Securely back in the tonality of F, the violin drops out and the piano explores the very highest reaches of the keyboard. The coda finally squeezes the syncopation out of the theme and creates an exhilarating *Presto*, with three quick beats per bar.⁹ Even as he approaches the finish line, Tcherepnin does not abandon the joy of juxtaposing conventional major-minor scales in the violin against sharp-edged hexachordal scales in the piano. The movement ends on a triumphant F major chord.

In December 1972, Yehudi Menuhin organised a commemorative broadcast concert at the BBC studios to honour the 50th anniversary of Tcherepnin's London debut. Since that debut had featured the premiere of this Sonata, Menuhin included a performance of it in the studio, with Tcherepnin at the piano.¹⁰ Menuhin wrote these words in the Foreword to Benjamin Folkman's *Compendium*:



Menuhin and Alexander Tcherepnin rehearsing Tcherepnin's F major Violin Sonata in the BBC studios in London in 1972

⁹ Mozart and Beethoven often compressed themes to build excitement in their codas – as, for example, in the conclusion of the final movement of Beethoven's C minor Piano Concerto, Op. 37, where he compresses the $\frac{2}{4}$ into a $\frac{6}{8}$ *Presto* for the coda.

¹⁰ It was later released on a CD (BBCMM395) issued with *BBC Music* magazine, Vol. 24, No. 7, March 2016.

I was so thrilled to broadcast and record the Tcherepnin Violin Sonata with the composer. It is a beautiful and expressive work, and, of course, to play it with Tcherepnin himself was a real privilege.¹¹

Ivan Tcherepnin was born in Issy-les-Moulineaux, in the suburbs of Paris, on 5 February 1943. The grandson of Nikolai and son of Alexander Tcherepnin and the noted pianist-pedagogue Ming Tcherepnin, Ivan received his earliest musical training from his parents. He later completed undergraduate and graduate study at Harvard University with his principal teacher, the composer Leon Kirchner. He also studied in Europe with Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen. After holding teaching positions in California at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Stanford University, Ivan joined the music faculty of Harvard University in 1972, where he also served as Director of the Harvard Electronic Music Studio.

His commissions included live electronic scores for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, numerous works for the American Wind Symphony and an oratorio commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Oratorio Music Society at Carnegie Hall. He received awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria. In 1996 he was awarded the prestigious Grawemeyer Prize for his Double Concerto for Violin and Cello (1995), commissioned and premiered by the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra with soloists Lynn Chang and Yo-Yo Ma.¹²

Ivan Tcherepnin performed on several instruments, including piano, psaltery, Persian santur and synthesisers, many of which were designed by his brother Serge. He conducted and lectured in Europe, Asia and the USA, and held composer residencies with the Rockefeller Foundation in Bellagio, Italy, at the Dartington Summer Music School in the UK, the Korsholm Music Festival in Finland, at Music at Marlboro in Vermont and at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival in New Mexico.

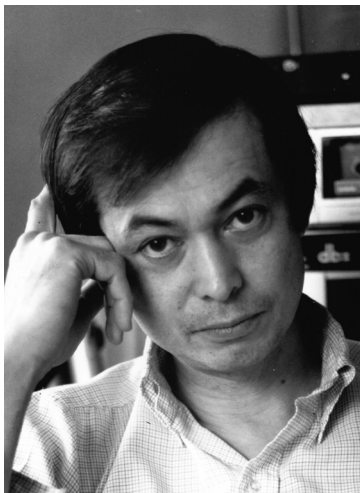
¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. iii.

¹² The Double Concerto was recorded in 1997 by the Moscow-based Musica Viva Orchestra and released on the Olympia label (ocd 640). Ivan Tcherepnin's works have also been recorded on the AWSO, Albany, Melisma, New World/CRI and Nonesuch labels.

An innovator in the field of live electronic music and multimedia, Ivan Tcherepnin held a deep conviction that the ear/mind connection is the most important avenue for communication and development available to humans. Keeping this channel open and free of artificial constraints was one of his primary artistic goals. The legacy left by this unforgettable musical poet reflects – as did his personality – deep insight, love of the moment, wit, generosity and a global vision of music and ideas.

Pensamiento [10] was written in 1996 for the flautist Sue-Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin and myself as pianist as part of the 40th-anniversary celebration of the Fulbright programme by the US State Department in Ecuador; the premiere was given that year in Quito. Ivan had developed a special affinity with the people and culture of Ecuador: he visited the Galápagos Islands in 1993, and then returned in June 1995 to present a multimedia composition at the opening of the artist Ivonne A-Baki's exhibit 'Sin Fronteras' at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Quito. As Ivan explained,

Pensamiento is about uniting North and South. My love of the land of Ecuador and its people is reflected in the opening, which is a mini 'Condor Song'. After an encounter with the Eagle and ensuing conflicts and dramas, the Condor peacefully soars away above the highest Andean peaks.¹³



Ivan Tcherepnin (1943–98)

¹³ Ivan Tcherepnin's note accompanying the Belaieff/Schott Music Publishers printed edition, Bel 680.

Ivan was only nineteen years old when he composed the brilliant, virtuosic *Cadenzas in Transition* [11] for flute, clarinet and piano in 1963. His programme note explains the ideas behind the work:

Cadenzas in Transition takes its form from the use of solo passages at key moments which serve to link different sections of the work. The term *Cadenza*, signifying a dramatic rhetorical display of a solo instrument, is interpreted freely. The piano cadenza is interrupted by the clarinet; the flute is present in the clarinet cadenza; and the clarinet intrudes on the flute cadenza. The controlled improvisation before the last section is a culmination of this process whereby the instruments can 'break loose' into free soloistic passages within the ensemble. This trio is dedicated to the composer's brother, inventor, and fellow composer Serge Tcherepnin.¹⁴

Sue-Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin first appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra as solo flute at the age of sixteen, and has subsequently performed throughout Europe, Latin and South America, Africa, Russia, China and the United States, as both soloist and recitalist. She has performed as a duo with the pianist David Witten since 1981, and has been the flautist with the Dinosaur Annex Contemporary Music Ensemble since 1985.

She is a founding member and flautist of the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, and has performed with the Boston Symphony, Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, Boston Lyric Opera Company, New England Ragtime Ensemble, Portland (Maine) and Springfield (Mass.) Symphonies, and in Broadway productions in the musical theatres of Boston. Performing often with contemporary-music ensembles, she has given many world premieres, among them flute concertos by Tom Flaherty and William Eldridge, the latter written in memory of her late husband, Ivan Tcherepnin.



Photograph: Gerald Belastock

¹⁴ Published on 9 February 1997 in the Dinosaur Annex Contemporary Music Ensemble programme note that accompanied the live performance featured in this album.

Committed to teaching, she has been a visiting artist at universities and conservatoires around the world, including the Mozarteum in Salzburg, the Shanghai Conservatoire and the Porto Alegre Conservatoire in Brazil. In Massachusetts, she has taught at South Shore Conservatory, New School of Music, New England Conservatory and Tufts University. Since 1991 she has served as principal adjunct flute instructor of the Music and Theater Arts Department of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she founded and directs the MIT Flute Ensemble, The Institooters.

Ian Greitzer is Principal Clarinetist with the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra and the Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms Society. He is a former member of the Boston Conservatory Chamber Players, Boston Musica Viva, Dinosaur Annex Contemporary Music Ensemble, Extension Works and the Boston Conservatory Faculty Wind Quintet. He has also performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Lyric Opera, Boston Ballet, the Opera Company of Boston and the Pittsburgh Symphony. His recordings have appeared on the Philips, Koch International, CRI and Northeastern labels. He is a former faculty member of the Boston Conservatory, Boston University School of Fine Arts, Atlantic Union College and UMass-Dartmouth. He is currently a full-time faculty member at Rhode Island College in Providence, Rhode Island.



The violinist **Quan Yuan** was awarded first prizes in the 2000 Denmark International Young Artist Competition, in the China International Young Artist Competition in 2006 and in the Delaware Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition, also in 2006. He has performed as a soloist and chamber musician across the United States, Europe and Asia, in venues including the Library of Congress, Carnegie Hall, Boston Symphony Hall, Jordan Hall in Boston, Merkin Hall in Manhattan, Sanders Theater in Cambridge (Mass.), in the Chinese People's Liberation Army Concert Hall and the Concert Hall of the National Library of China, both in Beijing, and in the Xinzhuang Culture and Arts Center in Taipei. He has played concertos throughout Europe and Asia. He gave master-classes in Taipei and Beijing in 2006, and he has been a judge

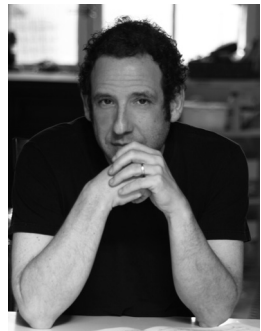
of the 'Golden Beijing' Violin Competition since 2012. He was also a faculty member of Focal Chinese Music in Boston. Since 2012 he has been a member of the prestigious Beijing Musicians Association and has made over 80 recordings.

Born in Beijing, he began his violin studies at age four with Muyun Yang. At age thirteen he studied with Wei Zhao in the Beijing Central Conservatoire of Music. After graduating with special distinction, he travelled to the United States to study with Joseph Silverstein at the Curtis Institute of Music. After graduating from Curtis, he continued his studies with Donald Weilerstein at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston from 2008 to 2015. During that period, he received a Bachelor's and a Master's degree and a Graduate Diploma with academic honours from the New England Conservatory of Music, and also served as a teaching assistant to Donald Weilerstein. He then performed for five years as a member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in New York. In 2021, he was appointed Concertmaster of the Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra in China.



Photograph: DEAL Studio

The pianist **Donald Berman** is recognised as an important exponent of new works by living composers and has performed music by twentieth-century masters and given recitals that link classical and modern repertoires. His principal teachers were Mildred Victor, George Barth, John Kirkpatrick and Leonard Shure. His *The Unknown Ives*, Volumes 1 and 2, and *The Uncovered Ruggles* (New World) represent the only recordings of the complete short piano works of Charles Ives and Carl Ruggles. His recordings on Bridge Records include the four-disc set *Americans in Rome: Music by Fellows of the American Academy in Rome*, *The Piano Music of Martin Boykan* and *Scott Wheeler: Tributes and Portraits*. He has also recorded *The Light That Is Felt: Songs of Charles Ives* (with the soprano Susan Narucki on New World), *Wasting the Night: Songs of Scott*



Photograph: Gil Gilbert

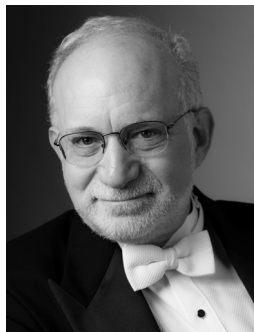
Wheeler (Naxos) and Christopher Theofanidis' Piano Concerto (Summit), as well as music by Su Lian Tan (Arsis), Arthur Levering (New World), Martin Boykan (New World and Bridge), Tamar Diesendruck (Centauro) and Aaron Jay Kernis (Koch).

Recent performances include solo recitals at Bargemusic, National Sawdust and (Le) Poisson Rouge, all in New York. He has also been a featured soloist at Zankel Hall and Rockport Music Festival, as well as abroad in Beijing, Belgrade, Rome and Israel. He has been the pianist of the Dinosaur Annex Contemporary Music Ensemble since 1987.

A 2011 Radcliffe Institute Fellow, Donald Berman is currently President of The Charles Ives Society. He teaches at the Longy School of Music of Bard College and at Tufts University.

David Witten's international career has included numerous concert tours in Ireland, Russia, Ukraine and elsewhere in Europe, in Mexico and South America, and in China. As the recipient of a 1990 Fulbright Scholar award, he spent five months teaching and concertising in Brazil, and he is frequently invited back to give concerts and master-classes.

Closer to home, his performances have included solo appearances with the Boston Pops Orchestra and the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, and various chamber-music collaborations with members of the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He has also been active in contemporary music. He has recorded piano music of Nicholas Van Slyck (Titanic Records) and commissioned over a dozen new works for Soli Espri, a chamber trio he founded in Boston with the clarinetist Chester Breznjak and the mezzo-soprano D'Anna Fortunato. With the flautist Sue-Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin, he formed Dúo Clásico, and their recording, *Flute and Piano Music of Latin America*, was released on the Musical Heritage Society label. His solo album, *Piano Music of Manuel M. Ponce*, was issued by Marco Polo. More recently, Albany Records released his *Eclectic Piano Music of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco*. His recordings of the piano music and, with the soprano Elena Mindlina, the songs of Nikolai Tcherepnin (both on Toccata Classics), were made as Artist Laureate of the Tcherepnin Society; he currently serves as Vice-President of the Society. His involvement in music has not been limited to performance. He is the editor of *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music: Essays in*



Photograph: Mike Peters

Performance and Analysis (Garland Publishing, New York, 1997), which includes his landmark analytical study of the *Chopin Ballades*.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, David Witten received his early training at the Peabody Conservatory of The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem. His undergraduate studies at Johns Hopkins University led to a degree in Psychology. He received a Master of Fine Arts in Piano at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He then graduated with high honours from Boston University, earning the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in piano performance. His most influential teachers were Anthony di Bonaventura, Walter Hautzig, Tinka Knopf, Benjamin Oren, Reynaldo Reyes, Leo Smit and Dorothy Taubman. After twenty years as an active recitalist, chamber-music pianist and teacher in the Boston area, he accepted a position at Montclair State University, New Jersey, where he is currently Coordinator of Keyboard Studies.

As an enthusiastic photographer, he has won top prizes in several international photography competitions. He had solo photography exhibitions in Budapest and Milan, and his photographs may be seen on www.davidwitten.com.



Recorded on 9 February 1997 during a live performance by the Dinosaur Annex Contemporary Music Ensemble at First and Second Church, Boston, Mass. (Ivan Tcherepnin's *Cadenzas in Transition*), on 3 January 2002 in the Emerson Studio, Arlington, Mass. (Ivan Tcherepnin's *Pensamiento*), on 17 and 18 April 2019 in the Recital Hall of The Performing Arts Center, Purchase College, State University of New York (Alexander Tcherepnin's *Romance*, *Élégie* and *Arabesque*, and Nikolai Tcherepnin's *Poème Lyrique* and *Andante and Finale*) and on 27 July 2021 in the Concert Hall of Drew University, Madison, New Jersey (Alexander Tcherepnin's Violin Sonata).
Recording engineers: Frank Cunningham (Ivan Tcherepnin's *Cadenzas in Transition*), Micha Schattner (Ivan Tcherepnin's *Pensamiento*) and Joel Gordon (works by Nikolai and Alexander Tcherepnin).

Publishers:

ALEXANDER TCHEREPNIN

Romance: Simrock

Élégie: Durand

Arabesque: Durand

Violin Sonata: Durand

NIKOLAI TCHEREPNIN

Poème Lyrique: Belaieff

Andante and Finale: Belaieff

IVAN TCHEREPNIN

Pensamiento: Belaieff

Cadenzas in Transition: Belaieff

This recording was made possible with the generous support of the Tcherepnin Society, and by a Career Development Grant from Montclair State University.

Special thanks to Pat Burns, Tatyana Kebuladze, Jiahui Suo, Sicheng Wu and Shixuan Zhang for their assistance at the recording sessions, and to Lukas Kebuladze for clarifying some music examples.

Quan Yuan wishes to thank David Segal Violins for the generous loan of the violin heard on this recording. It was made by Domenico Montagnana of Venice in 1727 and is a prime example of his work.

Booklet text: David Witten

Cover design: David M. Baker (david@notneverknow.com)

Typesetting and lay-out: Kerry Press, St Albans

Executive Producer: Martin Anderson

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THREE GENERATIONS

ALEXANDER TCHEREPNIN

(1899–1977)

- | | |
|--|-------|
| [1] <i>Romance</i> for violin and piano, WoO (1922)* | 2:06 |
| [2] <i>Élégie</i> for violin and piano, Op. 43 (1927)* | 3:52 |
| [3] <i>Arabesque</i> for violin and piano, Op. 11, No. 5 (1921)* | 2:28 |
| Sonata in F major for violin and piano, Op. 14 (1921) | 14:25 |
| [4] I <i>Allegro moderato</i> | 5:16 |
| [5] II <i>Larghetto</i> | 5:28 |
| [6] III <i>Vivace</i> | 3:41 |

NIKOLAI TCHEREPNIN

(1873–1945)

- | | |
|--|-------|
| [7] <i>Poème Lyrique</i> for violin and piano, Op. 9 (1900) | 10:37 |
| <i>Andante and Finale</i> for violin and piano, Op. posth. (1943)* | 13:35 |
| [8] I <i>Andante comodo espressivo</i> | 8:25 |
| [9] II <i>Allegro risoluto marcato</i> | 5:10 |

IVAN TCHEREPNIN

(1943–98)

- | | |
|--|-------|
| [10] <i>Pensamiento</i> for flute and piano (1996) | 3:19 |
| [11] <i>Cadenzas in Transition</i> for flute, clarinet and piano (1963)* | 13:15 |

Quan Yuan, violin [1]–[9]

TT 63:40

Sue-Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin, flute [10]–[11]

*FIRST RECORDINGS

Ian Greitzer, clarinet [1]

David Witten, piano [1]–[10]

Donald Berman, piano [11]