

Rudolf LEBERL

(1884–1952)

Selected Works for Guitar Solo

Fabian Hinsche, Guitar



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CD 1

Fallende Blätter (Falling Leaves), Op. 56	7:52	9 Spielstücke für Gitarre (Play Pieces for Guitar), Op. 48	20:52
1 Ruhig	2:28	17 Andante	3:10
2 Unruhig	1:14	18 Unruhe	3:15
3 Ernst	4:10	19 Andante	0:43
		20 Präludium	1:18
12 Charakterstücke (Character Pieces), Op. 90	24:49	21 Allegretto	2:19
4 Abendstück	2:32	22 Studie	1:07
5 Reigen	1:22	23 Tänzen	1:02
6 Tanzstück	1:00	24 Fantasiestück	3:29
7 Intermezzo	2:09	25 Romanze	4:29
8 Erinnerung	3:06		
9 Ländler	1:02		
10 Ländler	0:58		
11 Präludium	2:53		
12 Skizze	2:00		
13 Scherzo	1:20		
14 Studie	1:11		
15 Tanzstück	2:11		
16 Fantasiestück	3:05		

CD 2

8 Vortragsstücke (Concert Pieces), Op. 46	20:42	12 Stimmungsbilder (Mood Pictures), Op. 62	32:38
1 Bange Stunde	3:07	13 Fließend	2:37
2 Ländler	1:49	14 Gehend	1:35
3 Allegretto	3:08	15 Fließend	1:30
4 Sinnen	3:21	16 Empfindsam	1:59
5 Im Mondenschein	4:15	17 Mäßig	2:22
6 Präludium	1:05	18 Kraftvoll	2:51
7 Nachtstück	2:04	19 Langsam	5:23
8 Präludium	1:53	20 Ruhig	4:40
		21 Zierlich	2:54
Lenzesstimmen (Voices of Spring), Op. 56	9:17	22 Frisch	2:05
9 Ernst, aber fließend	3:49	23 Langsam	3:32
10 Freudig	1:26	24 Wuchtig	1:10
11 Ruhig dahinfließend	2:38		
12 Reigen	1:24		

Rudolf LEBERL (1884–1952) Selected Works for Guitar Solo

The work of Rudolf Leberl has not achieved the recognition it deserves. His oeuvre of nearly 1500 works comprises nearly three hundred single movements for guitar solo (collated in more than thirty large cycles), as well as works for orchestra, strings, winds, piano and chamber music. That Leberl is not better known as a composer is due in large part to the socio-political turmoil in Europe after the two World Wars.

Born in 1884 in Hoch-Semlowitz in Bohemia – at the time part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire – Leberl studied music and composition in Prague and Vienna, the cultural centres of Bohemia and Austria-Hungary and the regions which had produced composers including Dvořák, Janáček, Mahler and Martinů and writers Kafka, Rilke and Werfel. After the first World War large parts of Germany and Austria had been redistributed or designated as belonging to new countries and as a result Leberl, who had remained in his native Bohemia, found himself overnight to be one of the ethnic minority Sudetendeutsche, who were suppressed by Czech authorities as had the Czechs themselves been by the Austrians. From 1922 to 1938 Leberl was Professor of Music at the teacher training institute in Böhmisches-Budweis, and from 1938 to 1941 was forced to teach in Prachatitz, after the Nazi occupation of the Czech Republic. In 1941 he was ordered to resign by the Nazis and in 1946 fled to Bavaria. During the last years of his life he was financially dependent on his daughter Gertrude, a teacher. Leberl's compositions, which he had had to leave behind when he escaped, were rescued by some of his former pupils who later made the forest crossing into Bavaria to his final home. Rudolf Leberl died poor, forgotten and blind in 1952, near Regensburg.

Rudolf Leberl's compositional style can be characterised by three main elements: the German Romantic period, his love of poetry and a fascination with Bohemian folk music. Leberl embraced the traditions of the German-Austrian Romantic Period and combined

them with the guitar traditions of the nineteenth century in a uniquely innovative way. His compositions are written in a highly trained and educated manner not often found in guitar music of that era. His writing is idiomatic and not imitative, while his harmonic language uses typical Romantic elements such as enharmonics and chromaticism.

Leberl's affinity with poetry is in evidence throughout his guitar works. During his lifetime he wrote more than 500 songs for voice and different instruments and set poems by Eichendorff, Mörike, Kerner, Storm, Heine, Rückert and Goethe to music. This poetic affinity is evident in his Lieder-like melodies and in the lyrical titles of some of his pieces and cycles.

It is irrefutable that Leberl was inspired in great part by Bohemian folk music. He wrote, as did Mozart, Schubert and Mahler, dozens of *Ländler* (a typical folk dance from Austria), all of which are notable for their versatility and originality. There are many other works for guitar in his oeuvre based on folk songs and dances which perfectly illustrate the rhythmical richness so typical of Bohemia and its different facets of lyrical subtlety and vibrant rurality.

In his guitar works Leberl, who also signed some of his guitar compositions with his alias Rulf Lautner, proves himself a master of the small form. His Romantic miniatures are reminiscent of Schumann, Mendelssohn, Grieg or early Reger. He describes lyrical moods, moments and landscapes and collects them in larger cycles like musical kaleidoscopes. Leberl used to go for walks in the forests near his home with his guitar in order to capture scenes from his beloved Bohemia and set them to music. The six cycles on this recording showcase Rudolf Leberl's compositional versatility.

Fallende Blätter (Falling Leaves) is a small work about the different moods of autumn time and was composed in 1926. The first movement shows Leberl's Bohemian origins in the characteristic use of the minor

sixth interval instead of the major. The second movement represents a stormy autumn day, while the last movement is an elegant elegy for those elements of nature set to hibernate during the upcoming cruel winter.

Composed in 1926, the *12 Charakterstücke* (12 Character Pieces) offered Leberl the opportunity to present different Romantic moods collated into a large cycle similar to those of Grieg or Schumann. The title is a misnomer as there are in fact thirteen movements in the cycle. Calm *Abendstück* (Evening Piece) details a day's end in the countryside. *Reigen* (Reel) and *Tanzstück* (Dance Piece) are charming and energetic dances, whereas *Intermezzo*, with its interesting modulations and central section suggestive of the music of Villa-Lobos bears a striking resemblance to a Schubert *Impromptu*. *Erinnerung* (Remembrance) is one of Leberl's best works and shows his harmonic mastery. There follow two *Ländler*, Bohemian rustic dance miniatures. *Präludium* features a rather unusual arpeggio figure in the final section, whereas *Skizze* (Draft) is notable for its surprisingly harsh-sounding modulations based on the tritone interval. *Scherzo* is a virtuosic piece with rapid harmonic changes and rhythms. *Studie* develops a clock-ticking-like theme into a varied recapitulation. *Tanzstück* has a splendid rhythmical theme and a central section notable for its harmonic richness whereas *Fantasiestück* (Fantasy Piece) brings the cycle to an ethereal conclusion.

9 Spielstücke für Gitarre (9 Play Pieces for guitar) is a rather dark cycle written in 1924. The central section of the organ-like *Andante* is remarkable for its modern sounding variations. *Unruhe*, with its contrasting major and minor sections is a homage to Leberl's fellow Bohemian Johann Kaspar Mertz. A short, mysterious *Andante* in G minor is followed by the Baroque-sounding *Präludium* and elegant *Allegretto*. The Spanish elements provide interest in *Studie* while *Tänzchen* (Little Dance) is a jewel of subtle harmonics. The thick, piano-textured *Fantasiestück* is the penultimate work in the cycle, which is brought to a close by the peaceful *Romanze*,

composed in a delicate folk style.

The *8 Vortragsstücke* (8 Concert Pieces) were written in 1925 and call for the performer to express different moods and styles. *Bange Stunde* (Fearful Hour) and *Allegretto* call to mind Schumann, whereas the intervening *Ländler* exemplifies Austrian folk music. *Sinnen* (Pondering) explores myriad keys and harmonies. The Romantic *Im Mondenschein* (In the moonlight) and *Nachtstück* (Nocturne) show the gentler, warmer side of the guitar, while both *Präludien* require spectacular virtuosity and control over the entire instrumental range.

Lenzesstimmen (Voices of Spring) was composed in 1925 and describes the earth awakening after winter has gone. The sombre mood of the first movement is dissipated by the joyful tunes celebrating Spring's arrival. Similarly, the melancholy of the third movement is driven out by the energy of the final movement, a happy primaveral dance.

The *12 Stimmungsbilder* (12 Mood Pictures) include some of Rudolf Leberl's most demanding writing. The folk-inspired opening movement, with its weighty middle section contrasts with the second movement, with its swinging marching theme. The third movement is a charming waltz which is followed by a simple folk tune. The opening of *Mäßig*, the fifth movement in E minor, brings to mind a study by Fernando Sor and then quickly modulates through keys in adventurous succession. The syncopated energy of *Kraftvoll* contrasts with the elegiac spirit of the close-textured *Langsam*, while *Ruhig* features elegant virtuosity and calls for an unusual tremolo technique in the middle part, whereby the first and third strings are needed to accompany the tremoloed second. The cheerful *Frisch* follows a dramatic *Zierlich*, and the cycle is brought to a dramatic close after the funereal *Langsam* by the powerful *Wuchtig*, with its contemporary drop D tuning.

Fabian Hinsche, Guitar



Fabian Hinsche is one of the most successful German guitarists of his generation. He has won prizes at numerous international guitar competitions, including the Iserlohn Guitar Competition, Volos Guitar Competition and the Nürtingen Guitar Competition. He has performed internationally at festivals and concert venues, both as a solo artist and as part of the Mare Duo (with Annika Hinsche, mandolin). Fabian Hinsche is the dedicatee of compositions by Carlo Domeniconi, Jaime M. Zenamon, Konstantin Vassiliev, Jürg Kindle, Frank Wallace and Thomas Allen Levines, among others. As well as commissioning new repertoire, Hinsche has a keen interest in resurrecting lost works for guitar, including the works by Leberl featured on this recording.

His discography includes *Journey*, a solo album on the Aurea Vox label, and *Crystal Tears* (Trekel Records) and *Mare Duo plays Frank Wallace* (Gyre Records) as part of the Mare Duo. He has published articles on historical and aesthetic facets of the guitar and has had solo and chamber music arrangements published by Edition Margaux and Trekel. Fabian Hinsche has taught at the Cologne School for Music and Dance and studied guitar under Alfred Eickholt, Carlo Marchione and Hubert Käppel. He has attended masterclasses with Leo Brouwer, Manuel Barrueco, David Russell, Eliot Fisk, Odair Assad, Aniello Desiderio and Dale Kavanagh, among others. For more information please visit: www.fabian-hinsche.de

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Born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Rudolf Leberl is one of the most undeservedly neglected of Bohemian composers. He wrote extensively for the guitar, drawing on a rich variety of influences – German Romanticism, folk music, nineteenth-century guitar traditions, and a love of poetry – to forge his own highly individual voice. His cycles are musical kaleidoscopes and include rustic dances, baroque evocations, Spanish elements and beautiful romances. The wide-ranging and highly characteristic *12 Stimmungsbilder* (Mood Pictures) include some of his most engaging and virtuosic writing.

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1-3	Fallende Blätter (Falling Leaves), Op. 56	7:52
4-16	12 Charakterstücke (Character Pieces), Op. 90	24:49
17-25	9 Spielstücke für Gitarre (Play Pieces for Guitar), Op. 48	20:52
		Total Time 53:33

CD 2

1-8	8 Vortragsstücke (Concert Pieces), Op. 46	20:42
9-12	Lenzesstimmen (Voices of Spring), Op. 56	9:17
13-24	Stimmungsbilder (Mood Pictures), Op. 62	32:38
		Total Time 1:02:37

World Première Recordings
Fabian Hinsche, guitar

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Producer: Hubert Käppel

All works performed from manuscript. Opp. 46 and 48 published by Chanterelle

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