



STEINWAY CLASSICS

# RACHMANINOV

SANDRO RUSSO

*solo piano works*



STEINWAY & SONS

One of my main objectives in recording a **RACHMANINOV** album was to showcase the multiple facets of his artistic language. The particular works here highlight a powerful, underlying emotional thread that runs through these diverse pieces. RACHMANINOV'S fascination for the medieval *Dies Irae* Gregorian Chant (F-E-F-D-E-C-D) from the Latin *Requiem Mass* is indisputably evident in several of his symphonic masterpieces, such as *The Isle of the Dead* and the Paganini Rhapsody. The creative force of this motif in RACHMANINOV'S compositional artistry constantly adapts itself, assuming different meanings and shapes, according to the mood of the piece. The evolutionary arc from the First Piano Sonata Op. 28 (an early work from 1908, inspired by Goethe's *Faust*) to the Corelli Variations (his last major piano work) — both sharing the same, melancholy tonality of D minor — reflects significant and varied shades of *Dies Irae* and demonstrates how this poignant melodic element grew in the core of RACHMANINOV'S idiom.

Alongside these major compositions by one of the most recorded composers, are some of the lesser known works as well as a number of transcriptions of his non-piano compositions. And so a group of the *Etudes-tableaux*, themselves a progression from Studies into Musical Portraits, precede a group of his vivid vocal works arranged for solo piano. EARL WILD'S piano transcriptions of these selected songs gave the world new jewels of coloristic beauty and irresistible lyricism.

— SANDRO RUSSO

**SANDRO RUSSO**'s playing has often been referred to as a throwback to the grand tradition of elegant pianism and beautiful sound. Composer LOWELL LIEBERMANN wrote of him, "SANDRO RUSSO is a musician's musician and a pianist's pianist. There is no technical challenge too great for him, but it is his musicianship that ultimately makes the greatest impression. His interpretations reveal a unique and profound artist at work."

Born in San Giovanni Gemini, Italy, MR. RUSSO graduated summa cum laude from the V. Bellini Conservatory, and earned the Pianoforte Performing Diploma from the Royal College of Music in London 'with honors'. In 2000, he won the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra Concerto Competition, and has since performed at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Weill and Zankel Halls at Carnegie Hall, Salle Cortot in Paris, Teatro Politeama in Palermo and the Konzerthaus Berlin, among others.

His recitals include performances for The Rachmaninoff Society, the Dame Myra Hess series in Chicago, the American Liszt Society, the Music Festival of the Hamptons, the Houston International Piano Festival, and the Husum Festival of Piano Rarities in Germany, among others. He has appeared as a soloist with the Slovak Philharmonic, The Jacksonville Symphony, The Brussels Chamber Orchestra, and the New York Asian Symphony. His performances have aired on all the major radio stations in the US, the BBC Radio, RAI Radio 3 and the Slovakian TV. His other recordings include the albums *Scarlatti Recreated* and *Russian Gems - Piano Rarities*.

SANDRO RUSSO is a Steinway Artist.



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was recorded on June 13 & 20, 2016

at Oktaven Audio, Mount Vernon, New York.

Producers: RYAN STREBER, SANDRO RUSSO | Engineer: RYAN STREBER

Microphones: custom-made Flea / Oktaven M49-type, Brauner VM1s

Preamps: John Hardy M1s, Converters: Burl

Executive Producers: ERIC FEIDNER, JON FEIDNER

Art Direction: JACKIE FUGERE

Design: Cover to Cover Design, ANILDA CARRASQUILLO

Photo: JIYANG CHEN

Piano: Steinway Model D (Hamburg) #498260

Piano Technician: DAN JESSIE

# RACHMANINOV

(1873–1943)

*solo piano works*

## SANDRO RUSSO

### PIANO SONATA NO. 1 IN D MINOR, OP. 28

1	I. ALLEGRO MODERATO	12:06
2	II. LENTO	8:27
3	III. ALLEGRO MOLTO	14:34
4	ETUDES-TABLEAUX, OP. 33: NO. 3 IN C MINOR	5:09
5	ETUDES-TABLEAUX, OP. 33: NO. 6 IN E FLAT MINOR	1:43
6	ETUDES-TABLEAUX, OP. 39: NO. 5 IN E FLAT MINOR	5:22
7	DREAMS, OP. 38: NO. 5 (ARR. WILD)	3:15
8	FLOODS OF SPRING, OP. 14: NO. 11 (ARR. WILD)	3:52
9	THE LITTLE ISLAND, OP. 14: NO. 2, (ARR. WILD)	2:12
10	WHERE BEAUTY DWELLS, OP. 21: NO. 7 (ARR. WILD)	3:29
11	VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF CORELLI, OP. 42	17:51
	PLAYING TIME	78:04



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