

Roy AGNEW

PIANO MUSIC

Stephanie McCallum

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

ROY AGNEW Piano Music

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Stephanie McCallum, piano

*FIRST RECORDINGS

THE PIANO MUSIC OF ROY AGNEW

by Stephanie McCallum

The piano works of the Australian composer Roy Agnew (1891–1944) are persuasive pieces which show the work of a natural, highly creative pianist, comfortable with his instrument and able to craft cogent scores in the idioms of his day, including the most modern and controversial styles. They are all headed by dedications, which point to elements of Sydney musical society in an active period of musical and cultural appreciation, and many retain surviving links of interest to the present. Agnew's career developed at a time when Sydney's musical institutions, the New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music (opened in 1915) and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, launched in 1936 under the auspices of the new (1932) Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), were emerging. There was a thirst for musical culture – new European works, particularly from France, England and Russia, were taken up – but the infrastructure to support it was uneven. This was the environment in which Agnew's exceptional, and largely self-generated, creativity was nurtured. His contribution as a composer, and the degree of international success he achieved, were important to the young and developing Australian Federation in the many artistic connections that were strengthened through his relationships around the world.

Agnew was born in Annandale, Sydney, on 23 August 1891, the son of a cordial manufacturer, taking piano lessons with Daisy Miller and subsequently with Sydney Moss at the newly founded Conservatorium, where he also studied composition with the Australian composer Alfred Hill. In 1923 he moved to London, where he studied composition and orchestration with Gerard Williams, producing a tone poem *The Breaking of the Drought*, which received its first performance in Sydney in 1928 with Hill conducting. He was active as a broadcaster in both the UK and Australia in the 1930s and in 1944 was appointed to the staff of the New South Wales State

Conservatorium. Tragically, however, he died that year, aged only 53, after contracting septicaemia following tonsillitis.

A critical first connection was with the distinguished Odessa-born pianist, Benno Moiseiwitsch, who was married to an Australian violinist, Daisy Kennedy. Moiseiwitsch performed early piano pieces by Agnew in a Sydney Town Hall recital in 1920 and was instrumental in getting one of those pieces published by Chester in London in 1922, the very popular and highly dissonant *Dance of the Wild Men*.¹ The Russian-American pianist-composer Leo Ornstein (1893–2002) wrote his *Wild Men's Dance* (*Danse sauvage*) in 1913 and was performing it in concert at least by 1914, its fierce energy attracting considerable attention in the press. In 1920, Agnew's friend George de Cairos Rego published a review of a book published in 1917 in New York, *Piano Mastery* by Harriette Brower. In the book, Ornstein was interviewed and described his cluster technique. It therefore seems likely that, whether Agnew had heard Ornstein's piece or not, he had at least read about its style and content. Like Ornstein's *Wild Men's Dance*, Agnew's *Dance of the Wild Men* is a young man's piece, full of exuberance and an enthusiasm for the new; both works earned popularity and a degree of notoriety for their composers as figures embracing contemporary international musical ideas.

Many fine pianists with European pedigrees by study or background had settled in Sydney and carried on discussion and performances of the latest musical trends. The works in this recording show influences on Agnew's music that range from Liszt through to Debussy and Bax, but many especially display close affinity with the gestures, textures and harmonic world of Skryabin, a focus of interest in the musical scene of the Sydney of the day. Agnew's compositions nonetheless remain distinct and individual; in Neville Cardus' words,

he made everything second nature to his essentially lyrical imagination [...]. Roy Agnew did not make the ultra-modern gesture and declined to be merely 'fashionable' and percussive: he was genuinely without pretence and was gentle and modest. His works will outlive, in the quiet intimacy of those who play the piano for music's sake, vaster and more pretentious stuffs.²

¹ Previously recorded on limited-availability CDs by Larry Sitsky and by Tamara Cislowska.

² Obituary for Agnew, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 November 1944.

Rita Crews lists Agnew's works as including over seventy compositions for piano, some twenty vocal works, a single chamber work (again with voice) and the tone poem for voice and orchestra, *The Breaking of the Drought*.³

Agnew's **Rhapsody** 1 (1928) was published at the time he returned from his first visit to London to tour Australia as a recitalist. The dedication is to Frank Laffitte (1901–82), a distinguished English pianist of French background who knew Bax, Bliss and Ireland, among others. He recorded some Duo-Art rolls in the 1920s, performed at the Proms and taught piano at the Guildhall School.

Marked initially 'With a jolly swinging rhythm', the Rhapsody has an English modal colour recalling the music of Bax. The main theme passes through transformations such as a section marked 'expressively' and 'a little slower', with the left hand simultaneously marked at a lower dynamic 'in a confused murmur'. To create the confusion, the fundamental bass notes shift the pulse against the melody in an irregular way. After a second subject, the main theme recapitulates in a *quasi fugato* contrapuntal setting, with a warm tenor augmentation rounding the texture (Ex. 1).

Ex. 1

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece, labeled 'Ex. 1'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the right hand and a bass clef staff for the left hand. The right hand part begins with a melodic line starting on a whole note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, then a half note D5. This is followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, including a sharp sign (F#) and a double sharp sign (C##). The left hand part starts with a whole note chord of G2, B2, and D3, then moves to a half note chord of G2, B2, and D3, and continues with various chords and single notes, including a sharp sign (F#) and a double sharp sign (C##). The score is marked with a dynamic of 'mf' (mezzo-forte) and includes a fermata over the final notes of the right hand.

The lyrical, soaring second subject sits on a pedal point. In both exposition and recapitulation it starts *pianissimo* and then expands warmly, using the breadth of the piano range held in the pedal to create *fortissimo* climaxes (Ex. 2).

³ <https://www.australiancomposers.com.au/pages/roy-agnew-australian-heritage-series>, accessed 1 July 2019.

Ex. 2



The virtuosic coda breaks away via an accelerating chromatic scale to ‘very fast and well marked’ thematic octaves, finally broadening and then accelerating through three registers to a bold finish. This charming and well-constructed piece, surprisingly never previously recorded, seems to encapsulate the energy, pianistic suavity and free inventiveness of early Agnew.

In 1938, ten years after the composition of the Rhapsody, Agnew launched a late-night weekly radio programme, ‘Modern and Contemporary Composers’ Session’, where for five years he and a younger-generation Agnew enthusiast, Gordon Watson (1921–99), presented modern piano works live to air; the composers represented ranged from the Second Viennese School through Busoni, Debussy, Milhaud, Skryabin, Stravinsky and Szymanowski.⁴

Agnew had married in Sydney in 1930 before returning to London for a few years with his new bride, and there he wrote many of his piano pieces, including the **Toccata** [2] (1933). Dedicated ‘to my Wife’, it was published before their final return to Sydney in 1934. Unlike the other pieces from this period, which were all published by Augener in London, the Toccata was published by Chester, also

⁴ My copy of the Rhapsody was passed down from my Sydney teacher, Gordon Watson. It was clearly previously owned by Wilfred Arlom, whose signature appears on the cover. He was one of a group of fearless pianists, including Winifred Burston and Henri Penn, who performed Debussy, Skryabin and other modern composers in the 1920s and beyond in Sydney. My previous teacher, Alexander Sverjensky, gave the first performance of Agnew’s last major work, *Sonata Legend*, in 1944, published in 1949 as *Capricornia (Sonata Legend)*.

in London, in 'The Chesterian' series of Graded Piano Music edited by Thomas F. Dunhill. It weighed in at Grade VII (Advanced), along with works by Goossens, Medtner, Palmgren, Poulenc, Skryabin, Swinstead and others. This association with graded examination music was later followed up with works set by the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB), for which Agnew, in his final years, also acted as an examiner.

The main motif of the Toccata involves a theme in thirds above which write *perpetuum mobile* semiquavers moving often in a *tremolando* figuration and ranging widely across registers and key centres. Cross-rhythms in the bass add complexity (Ex. 3) as, later, do double notes with added melodic material.

Ex. 3



Fluid lines build to cascading double notes in fourths, with a 'slow and expressive' questioning section interrupted by a wave of notes marked 'As fast as possible', before a reharmonised recapitulation of the opening material. The final climactic sweep is finished with a gentle swirl of notes over bass harmonics (Ex. 4).

'Whither' [3] and 'Exaltation' [4] (1931) were published as a contrasted pair of miniatures, *Two Pieces for Piano*. Their virtuosity indicates the pianistic powers of their dedicatee, Rex de Cairos Rego. Rex and his sister Iris were both pianists and composers in Sydney. Their father, George, was founding Secretary of the Musical Association of NSW (1912–34) during the period when Agnew built his early reputation as a composer. 'Whither', marked 'Expressively' and *rubato*, gently floats between B flat minor and

Ex. 4

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece, labeled 'Ex. 4'. It consists of two staves: a bass staff on the left and a treble staff on the right. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The piece begins with a series of eighth-note patterns in both hands. A large slur covers the first two measures, with '8va' written above it. The third measure has a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking. The piece concludes with a final chord in the treble staff. There are some markings below the staves, including 'v' and 'silent' with a circled 'x'.

a disarming G flat major and acts as a foil for the short burst of the following piece, 'Exaltation', to be played 'With passion and intensity'. Highly charged and skidding around the black keys of E flat minor, tempo fluctuations are inserted frequently throughout, encouraging a freely expressive approach.

Agnew's **Three Preludes** (1927) are among at least seven he wrote for piano. These three miniatures sound like a homage to Skryabin's Op. 11 Preludes, harmonically complex but with clear tonal centres. They are dedicated to Miss Gertrude Barton, a musical Sydney school principal who had helped organise donations to support Agnew's initial travel to London in 1923. Prelude I [5], 'With simple tenderness', traces contrapuntal lines, bound by held notes in the line to create harmonic warmth. Though chromatically inflected, it is in a simple A major. Prelude II [6], 'Intensely (with an elastic rhythm)', creates brooding darkness with a pulsating texture in E flat minor. Characteristic *rubati* are marked throughout. Prelude III [7], 'Expressively', like Prelude I, is also marked *rubato*. Ruminative and lyrical, this piece slides chromatically without really settling on its tonic chord of B major until the very end.

A Dance Impression [8] (1927) introduces popular music elements with swing rhythms, bass-drum beats and ragtime. The opening descent juxtaposes chords of D and E flat major. Complex jazz-style harmonies later settle down in the middle section

to a fairly stable G major. Parallel chords and transpositions disrupt the sense of key elsewhere (Ex. 5), but the ending repeats the opening idea with D major now firmly in control. From the same year as the Three Preludes, this piece is similarly dedicated to a Sydney personality, Henri Penn, a fine piano soloist who also acted as the accompanist for visiting soloists for the ABC up until the 1960s.

Ex. 5

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece, labeled 'Ex. 5'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff (piano) and a bass clef staff (bass). The music is in 2/4 time. The first measure is marked 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and features a series of chords in the right hand and a descending eighth-note line in the left hand. The second measure is marked 'increase' and shows a similar chordal texture with a more active bass line. The third measure continues the chordal pattern. The score includes various accidentals and articulation marks.

Drifting Mists [9] (1931) is marked ‘Dim and shadowy’, the texture at the opening threading wispy, curving semiquavers between a sombre theme and striding octave bass. The middle section builds gradually to a sweeping climax with both hands leaping to maintain the full pedal-held sound (Ex. 6). The sound dissipates quickly before the return of the main theme, extinguishing itself in a characteristic Agnew gesture of a fading swirl of very fast notes. The marking ‘gradually more vague and shadowy to the end’ could equally apply to the next work, which embodies a similar subterranean gloom at the close. Shadforth Hooper, the dedicatee, was a well-established pianist who had returned to Sydney in 1907 after three years in Europe, where she had studied with Michael Hambourg in London and Teresa Carreño in Berlin. She later taught early piano, harmony and theory to the distinguished Australian composer Nigel Butterley (b. 1935).⁵

Agnew’s *Sonata* (1929) [10] immediately strikes the listener who is familiar with Stryabin’s Piano Sonata No. 9 (1913) as working in the same tonal world and with similar motif shapes, length and structure. The lively discussion and performance of Stryabin’s sonatas in Sydney in the early 1920s make Agnew’s acquaintance with this

⁵ In another historical link, I gave the London premiere of Nigel Butterley’s *Uttering Joyous Leaves* (1981). It is also recorded on my album *Notations* (Tall Poppies TP037, 1994).

Ex. 6

work certain, and Larry Sitsky surmises⁶ that the close relationship of the two works could be a reason that it remained unpublished at Agnew's death. For this recording a typeset edition taken from a facsimile of the composer's manuscript and published by the Australian Music Centre in 1999 was used. This typeset copy clearly has some errors, and there will always be questions about some pitches, but any repetitions which are slightly varied, and which still make sense, have been left in place, as there are so many instances in Agnew of slight variations and reharmonisations as part of his style.⁷ As with all his piano music, counterpoint is an essential aspect of the fabric. The embedding of the main motif (Ex. 7) is pervasive and often ingenious (Ex. 8). The final blend of the

Ex. 7

⁶ Quoted in Kate Bowan, *Wild Men and Mystics: Rethinking Roy Agnew's Early Sydney Works*, published online on 24 November 2011.

⁷ There are differences between the edition used here and that edited by Larry Sitsky (Wirripang Press, Wollongong, 2016). Sitsky's edition, which follows his earlier recording of the work (CSM:19, Canberra School of Music, 1994; now out of print), adds textural thickening through the use of devices such as additional octaves. The version used here was chosen in order to give clarity to Agnew's voice-leading and motivic treatment.

main motif as a cross-rhythmic textural underpinning to another motif is particularly effective (Ex. 9).

Ex. 8

Ex. 8 is a musical score for piano, consisting of three measures. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major/D minor). It features a complex rhythmic texture with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet in the second measure. The bottom staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat. It features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. Dynamic markings include *sf* and *sfz*. The piece is marked with a tempo of *Allegretto* and a time signature of 4/4.

Ex. 9

Ex. 9 is a musical score for piano, consisting of two measures. The top staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major/D minor). It features a complex rhythmic texture with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat. It features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. Dynamic markings include *sf* and *sfz*. The piece is marked with a tempo of *Allegretto* and a time signature of 4/4.

Agnew's **Etude** [11] (1924) is both sprawling and sparkling as a study in extreme velocity and is marked to be played 'With great exaltation'. It is a more tonally experimental and extended effort than 'Exaltation' of the *Two Pieces for Piano*, despite being written seven years earlier. It has no consistent key or tonal centre and tritone relationships in the bass are frequent. The piece was published by

Curwen after Agnew's first arrival in London and is dedicated to Solito de Solis, a celebrated Italian pianist who was active in England and Europe and later settled in the USA.

Three Poems (1927) published in the same year as the *Three Preludes*, were dedicated to Agnew's first composition teacher in Sydney, Alfred Hill. **Poem I** [12], 'Expressively (with elasticity)', and **Poem II** [13], 'With simplicity', again evoke freedom of pulse with many suggestions of tempo modification and *rubato*. The first has a simple ternary structure, a moment marked 'questioningly' and an inconclusive ending, whereas the second transposes the main idea three times to disparate keys but finally arrives on a simpler cadence. **Poem III** [14] dwells on an obsessive and innovative textural idea marked 'Grimly (almost savagely)'. The inner melody in the middle section (Ex. 10) relieves the tension with a perfumed sensuous quality reminiscent of Skryabin, returning 'serenely' towards the close.

Ex. 10

The musical score for Ex. 10 consists of two staves: a piano (left hand) and a right hand. The piano part begins with a *retard.* marking and a fermata over a series of chords. The right hand part begins with an *expressively with elasticity* marking and features a melodic line with a fermata. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p*.

Where the 1929 Sonata closely mirrors Skryabin, the *Sonata Poème* [15] (completed in 1935 and published by Allan & Co. in Melbourne in 1936) shows clear influences from the Sonata in B minor of Liszt. Although it is a much shorter work, the thematic material announced in the opening slow section is used and transformed throughout, as in the Liszt (Exx. 11 and 12).

Ex. 11

Slowly, expressively (about $\text{♩} = 56$)

Musical score for Ex. 11, consisting of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system is in 6/8 time and includes the markings *p* and *rubato*. The second system is in 9/8 time and includes the marking *rit.* (ritardando). The score features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together and others held as longer values. There are also some dynamic markings like *f* and *rit.* in the second system.

Ex. 12

Fast, with a good swinging Rhythm (about $\text{♩} = 168$)

Musical score for Ex. 12, consisting of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system is in 4/4 time and includes the marking *f* (forte). The second system is in 4/4 time and includes the marking *v* (accents). The score features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together and others held as longer values. There are also some dynamic markings like *f* and *v* in the second system.

The action slows to a rhetorical central section reminiscent of a more impassioned but similar section in the Liszt. Here it is based around a previously heard slow repeated note figure (Ex. 13), which has a strong similarity to one of the main motifs in the Liszt.

Ex. 13

Musical score for Ex. 13, featuring piano and bass staves. The piece is in 5/4 time. The piano part begins with a *sf* dynamic marking and a slur over the first three notes. The bass part starts with a *fff* dynamic marking. The score includes dynamic markings such as *sf sf sf sf*, *mf*, *accel.*, and *ret.*. The tempo changes from 5/4 to 6/4. The piano part ends with a *rit.* marking and a final chord.

Fast passagework follows, using Lisztian descending chromatic figures (Ex. 14).

Ex. 14

Musical score for Ex. 14, featuring piano and bass staves. The piece is in 4/4 time. The tempo is marked *Fast*. The piano part begins with a *mp* dynamic marking. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *mf*, and *ff*. The piano part ends with a *rit.* marking and a final chord.

A recapitulation in the home key of F sharp minor brings back the opening fast section, before modulating in new directions. A new climactic section, ‘Very definite and intense’, is inserted before the final return to the opening slow material. Marked ‘serenely’, it has an effect, similar to the Liszt coda, of having been transformed by the fire of the preceding turmoil, and the final ascent and repeated B major chords (Ex. 15 (a)) seem to pay homage to Liszt’s masterpiece (Ex. 15 (b)).

Ex. 15

(a) Agnew

8va-----, 8va-, 8va-, 8va-, 8va,

pp *diminish to the end* *ppp*

(b) Liszt

pp *ppp* *lunga* *ppp*

8ba----- * fto. * fto. * fto. * 8ba----- *

The restricted length could have been designed with one eye on student competition performances, as Agnew makes allowances for an even shorter version of the work. He writes on the score: 'For competitive purposes it might be desirable to make the cut from pages 11 to 14 indicated by the signs unless otherwise advised, but the complete work must always be played by finalists.'

The dedicatee was Thorold Waters, a distinguished journalist, critic and tenor, but also the Editor of the journal *Australian Musical News* from 1923 to 1940, 'an open forum of enlightened musical opinion', containing a number of pages of copyright music in each edition. Musical news and events, biographies, interviews and discussion of musical technique (including an article on this topic by Agnew) were included, along with reviews of local and overseas performances.

Three Lyrics form a third triptych from 1927, along with the Preludes and *Poems* already heard. 'The Falling Snow' [16] is Impressionist in style and marked 'Very calm and serene throughout'. A regular repeated E travels the entire piece entwined in harmonies recalling Debussy's Preludes. 'A Quest' [17] is thoughtful and wanders through changing bar lengths and far-flung key areas, transposing the theme each time until returning home to its opening C major for the close. 'The Happy Lad' [18] enjoys English modal roots and a folksong atmosphere in a clear E flat major. There is a charming and dreamy central section, surrounded by all the vigorous activity marked 'Care-free and happily'. The pieces are dedicated to the New Zealand-born pianist Esther Fisher (1901–91), who went to London in 1919, met Busoni, studied with Isidor Philipp in Paris and later Artur Schnabel in Berlin, and made her debut in London in 1923.⁸

Elf Dance: Etude (1928) [19] and *A May Day* (1927) [20] are typical English-style character pieces of the period, both written for advanced pianists with a command of

⁸ It is interesting to note that, although ten years younger than Agnew, Fisher was already making her London debut just as Agnew was only managing his first trip to London. On 15 March 1923 *The Sydney Morning Herald* reports a concert event gathering donations for his travel expenses: 'Mr. W. Arundel Orchard, as President of The British Musical Association (Sydney centre), pronounced the occasion of that gathering as unique, inasmuch as they were for the first time endeavouring to send off an Australian composer instead of an instrumentalist or vocalist'. The rivalry between Sydney and Melbourne is also referred to: 'Mr. Agnew's efforts had roused the enthusiasm of Moiseiwitsch, Spivakovsky, and Fritz Hart, and during his recent visit to Melbourne it had been declared that, had he been a Victorian, he would have been sent to London long ago (applause and laughter)'.

velocity, despite their deceptively winsome titles. They appeared in the ‘Clarendon Piano Series’ edited by John Ireland and published by Oxford University Press. The first, in B flat minor, is marked ‘Very fast, light and fantastic’; the second, in a sunny G flat major, is to be played ‘Fast, joyously’. As with his other short pieces from this period, there are frequent changes of key and of time-signature, producing irregular phrase-lengths and breaking up what could otherwise have become overly simple material. *A May Day* employs a favourite Agnew device of a warm inner voice duetting with the main theme (Ex. 16). It is dedicated to Madame de Beaupuis, widow of Agnew’s first musical mentor and early piano teacher in Sydney. She collaborated with Gertrude Barton in gathering financial support for Agnew’s early travel to London.

Ex. 16

The musical score for 'A May Day' is presented in a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The tempo marking is 'softly (a tempo)'. The score is divided into three measures. The first measure is marked 'slightly ret.' and features a main theme in the treble clef and a supporting bass line in the bass clef. The second measure is marked 'Inner voice marked' and shows the main theme continuing in the treble while a new, more active inner voice enters in the bass. The third measure continues the duet. Performance markings include 'rit.' (ritardando) at the end of the first and third measures, and an asterisk (*) below the second measure. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

The album ends with Agnew’s first published compositions, a picturesque suite entitled *Australian Forest Pieces* (1913) and dedicated to Miss Annette Scammell, an Adelaide pianist who returned to settle in Sydney in 1911 after six years’ piano study in Stuttgart and Berlin. She also helped organise an early public performance by Agnew that included Nos. 2 and 5 from this set. The light-hearted playfulness of No. 1, ‘Gnome Dance’ [21], marked ‘Playfully’, and No. 3, ‘Forest Nymphs at Play’ [23], to be played ‘With Humour’, suggests fairy-tale narratives, with the help of various indications for pauses and sudden changes of time. Gnomes and nymphs clearly travelled out with the Scots from the old-country forests and made themselves comfortable in the Australian

bush. By contrast, the remaining pieces capture the thought-provoking tranquillity and space of natural surroundings. No. 2, 'When Evening Shadows Fall' [22], explores ever-softer shades of harmony and is marked to be played 'Very tenderly'. As night progresses, uncertainty intensifies with No. 4, 'Night in the Forest' [24], 'Somewhat vague and mysterious', climaxing 'with tragic feeling'. There is a fresh start in No. 5, 'By a Quiet Stream' [25], 'Quietly moving throughout', which is beautifully, if conservatively, harmonised with subtle nuance. The final piece, No. 6, 'The Forest Grandeur' [26], is to be played 'With dignity and breadth' and movingly recalls the motif of tragic feeling from No. 4, conquering its uncertainty with a surprise change of key to a major tonality and a feeling of strength and confidence.

Described by Anthony Clarke in *The Bulletin* as 'one of Australia's foremost pianists', **Stephanie McCallum** enjoys an international career, appearing on over forty albums (including 21 solo discs) and also making live solo and concerto performances. Playing a repertoire from the eighteenth to the 21st century, she is especially noted for her performances of virtuosic music of the nineteenth century, particularly the music of Liszt and Alkan, and for her advocacy of demanding contemporary solo and ensemble scores.

Stephanie McCallum is Associate Professor in piano at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, a school of the University of Sydney, where she herself studied with Alexander Sverjensky and with the noted Liszt player Gordon Watson. After advanced studies in England with the Alkan authority Ronald Smith, she made her Wigmore Hall debut in 1982, when she gave what is believed to be the first performance of Alkan's *Chants*, Op. 70. She is also credited with the first complete performance of Alkan's *Trois Grandes Études*, Op. 76, in London. Her live performances of the Concerto, the Symphony and other



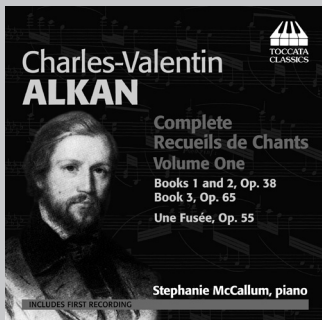
works from Alkan's *Douze Études dans les tons mineurs*, Op. 39, have been described by critics as 'titanic', 'awe-inspiring', 'stupendous', 'virtuosic pianism of the highest calibre' and 'one of the glories of Australian pianism'.

Stephanie McCallum has appeared extensively as a soloist in Australia, France and the United Kingdom, and has toured Europe with The Alpha Centauri Ensemble. She has made many appearances as soloist at the Sydney Festival, and performed at the Brighton, Cheltenham, Huddersfield and Sydney Spring festivals. A noted exponent of contemporary music, she was a founding member of the contemporary ensembles AustraLYSIS and Sydney Alpha Ensemble and was joint artistic director of the latter from its inception. She has performed with such groups as the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Elision and The Australia Ensemble. She appears in ensemble on many albums, as well as as soloist on two discs by the Sydney Alpha Ensemble: *Strange Attractions* and *Clocks*, featuring music by Elena Kats-Chernin. In 2000 she gave the world premiere of Kats-Chernin's *Displaced Dances* with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, a piano concerto written especially for her (available with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra on ABC Classics 4816430). She also performs on historic eighteenth- and nineteenth-century instruments and has recorded piano-duet music by Alkan, Meyerbeer and Moscheles on instruments from the Maison Erard with Erin Helyard, and also a solo disc on an 1853 Erard for Toccata Classics, Alexandre Boëly: *Piano Music, Volume One* (TOCC 0471).

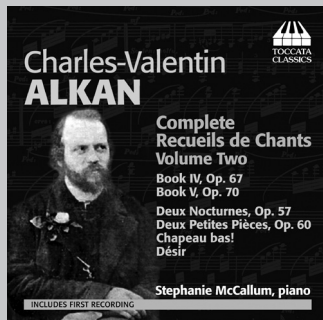
Past solo recordings include a two-disc set of the complete piano sonatas of Weber; *Illegal Harmonies: The 20th-Century Piano*; *Perfume*, a best-selling disc of rare French piano music; two collections of music by Liszt, *The Liszt Album* and *From the Years of Pilgrimage*; and an album of piano works by Erik Satie, *Gymnopédies*. With the release in 2006 of a two-CD set of Alkan's *Douze Études dans les tons mineurs*, she was the first pianist ever to have recorded both of Alkan's sets of studies in the major and the minor keys, Opp. 35 and 39. More recent releases include *A Romantic Christmas*; an album of Schumann's piano music, *Scenes from Childhood*, including the *Fantasia* in C major, Op. 17; and a Beethoven premiere recording – *Für Elise: Bagatelles for piano by Ludwig van Beethoven*. This disc contains a *Bagatelle* in F minor, probably the last piano piece that Beethoven wrote, and never previously published, performed or recorded. Her recording of the complete Alkan *Recueils de chants* for Toccata Classics (TOCC 0157 and 0158) was received with universal praise: *CD Review* on BBC Radio 3 felt that the music was 'really exquisitely played by Stephanie McCallum, who really "gets" the style [...] if you really want to get to know what this Alkan guy is all about, then Stephanie McCallum can really show you very well indeed'. She followed up these Alkan recordings with

a Toccata Classics album dedicated to the piano music of Guy Ropartz (TOCC 0326), about which *Fanfare* was equally enthusiastic: ‘Stephanie McCallum has given us a close-to-ideal first hearing of these works. She has an extraordinary dynamic range, a keen awareness of harmonic tension and resolution, an expansive approach to rubato, and a sophisticated understanding of Ropartz’s large-scale structural organization.’ For a complete list of recordings please visit Stephanie’s website at www.stephaniemccallum.com.

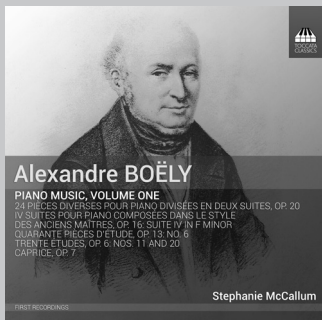
Stephanie McCallum on Toccata Classics



TOCC 0157



TOCC 0518



TOCC 0471



TOCC 0326



TOCCATA DISCOVERY CLUB

<p>David MATTHEWS COMPLETE STRING QUARTETS, VOLUME FOUR 1970-1980 COMPLETE MATTHEWS TRANSCRIPTIONS 1970-1980 Piano: Thomas Dunlop Piano Trio: No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 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993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000</p>	<p>Heinrich Wilhelm ERNST COMPLETE WORKS, VOLUME FIVE 1820-1829 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: PIANO SONATA NO. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 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999, 1000</p>	<p>Charles O'BRIEN COMPLETE ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME TWO 1950-1959 THE SONG OF THE EXILES AND THE DEPORTÉES 1950-1959 THE SONG OF THE EXILES AND THE DEPORTÉES 1950-1959</p>	<p>Vladas JAKUBENAS THE SONG OF THE EXILES AND THE DEPORTÉES 1950-1959 THE SONG OF THE EXILES AND THE DEPORTÉES 1950-1959</p>	<p>Pauline VIARDOT SONGS 1840-1850 THESE RECORDS BY THE LONDON</p>
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Piano technician: Ara Vartoukian
Recording engineer: Jonathan Palmer
Recording producer: Ralph Lane OAM
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